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Errata

In VISTAS, Vol. I, No. 1, on p. 76, the poem beginning "The night has a thousand eyes" is erroneously attributed to Emily Dickinson. The author is the English poet Francis William Bourdillon (1852–1921).

The following changes should also be made in the Index to Vol. I, No. 1, of VISTAS: on p. 162, the entry "Bourdillon, William, 'The night has a thousand eyes,' 76." should be inserted after the entry "Bosch"; on p. 164, the entry "Dickinson, Emily," etc., should be deleted; on p. 169, under the entry "Night has a thousand eyes, the," the author should be listed as William Bourdillon.

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VISTAS

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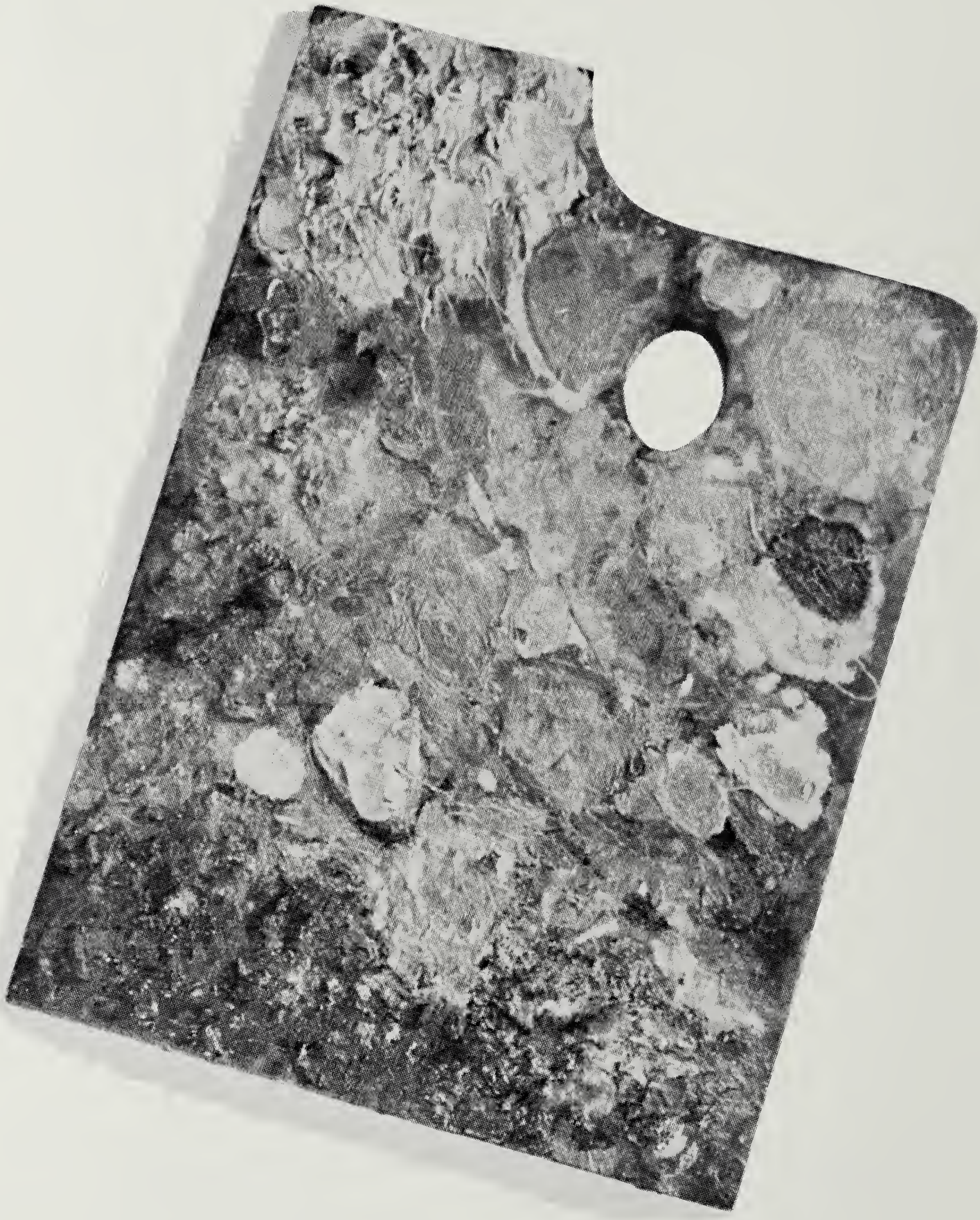
The essays, etc., appearing in the issues of this journal will, for the most part, be derived from the work of seminar students, alumni, and members of the staff of The Barnes Foundation Art Department. On occasion, we shall publish articles and pieces not directly concerned with the Foundation's philosophy but representing original work by the Art Department's students and outside contributors which the editorial staff considers to be of general interest to Vistas readers. Vistas will be published twice a year.



Matisse's Palette in 1907

(Privately owned)

Flake white	Emerald green	Raw Sienna
Ivory black	Alizarin	Burnt Sienna
Ultramarine	Vermilion	Strontian yellow
Cobalt	Venetian red	Cadmium yellow
Prussian blue	Cadmium red	(light, medium, dark)

VISTAS

VOL. I Autumn—Winter 1979–1980 No. 2

Transferred Values

Part III*

by VIOLETTE DE MAZIA**

AMONG those who have followed our discussion of transferred values to this point,† the question might be raised by some as to whether transferred values are not simply the other side of the coin of relationships‡—*i.e.*, whether the term is but another name for the product, the outcome, of the relationships among the components of an object or situation. The argument could, for instance, go: when we said "forge of Vulcan" to characterize an expressive quality perceived in Soutine's "Gourdon" (Plate 6),¶ we were, in fact, responding to the effect of the interactions among the colors used, the play of light and dark, the manner of paint application, and so on, just as it is the

*This is the third in a series of articles on the general topic of Transferred Values. Some of the material of this series was originally presented by the author in class lectures at The Barnes Foundation.

**Director of Education of The Barnes Foundation Art Department.

†See Violette de Mazia, "Transferred Values [Parts I and II]," in *The Barnes Foundation Journal of the Art Department*, Autumn, 1978, The Barnes Foundation Press, Merion, Pa., pp. 3–33, and *Vistas*, Spring–Summer, 1979, The V. O. L. N. Press, Merion, Pa., pp. 3–39.

‡For a discussion of relationships, see Violette de Mazia, "Learning to See," *The Barnes Foundation Journal of the Art Department*, Spring, 1972, pp. 14–26.

¶Violette de Mazia, "Transferred Values: Part II," *Vistas*, Spring–Summer, 1979, p. 19.

particular disposition of shapes and the kinds of brush strokes, etc., and what these do to and with each other that suggested to us the demon and snakes which we "saw" populating that Soutine landscape and furthering the sense of weirdness expressed therein.* Therefore, the argument would continue, transferred values and relationships in the Soutine actually account for the same things, if through a different choice of words, and the distinction between them is merely a matter of semantics. And, carrying the argument to its inevitable conclusion, since transferred values are, in their inception, personal, even, in a sense, subjective, to maintain that we can be objective about the Soutine, about any work of art, is, after all, a pipe dream.

While the above argument does, in some respects, accurately portray a good deal of the connection between transferred values and relationships, it misses something essential about their respective natures. In clearing up the confusion about the two terms, we hope not only to answer those who have raised the issue, but also to make more exact, for those to whom the question has not or would never have occurred, what the meaning of transferred values is and what rôle they play in the identity and significance of a work of art and our perception of it.

Although relationships play their part in the process and concept of transferred values, the two terms are, we can state bluntly, by no means synonymous or interchangeable. There are, however, likenesses between them. John Dewey said of relationships that they are "active, direct, energetic." The same may be said of transferred values, for they, too, *do* something. But the "doing" on the part of relationships consists of a changing of the nature, the identity, of the items related, albeit without a changing of these items in and of themselves: a red patch juxtaposed to a blue patch alters the latter's tone, invests it with, perhaps, a greenish cast, and, by the law of simultaneous contrasts, the blue correspondingly makes of the red, say, a more orangy color than it would otherwise be. But nothing of the blue itself enters, is *transferred*, into the red, nor does it

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**Ibid.*, pp. 26–27.

become a part or aspect of the red, and vice versa—*i.e.*, neither the blue patch next to the red nor the red patch acquires any red or blue, that is, purple, tonality by the relationship.* Similarly may the blue color that makes up the patch be so put down, so related to the surface upon which it is applied and to its context of other colors and lights and darks, etc., that it takes on either a translucency or an opacity, yet remains *that* particular blue. Again, a boy whose parents have another child becomes, by his relationship to the new sibling, a brother, though he has not changed from the boy he was into another; rather, it is that the baby, just by coming into existence within the general world and life of the boy, has endowed the boy with the new identity of "brother," as well as acquiring brotherhood himself.

Thus is the activity of relationships responsible for changes in the nature and identity of the participating components—each one affects the others, each one undergoes the effect of the others—*without any of the components transferring any part or aspect of its own makeup to the others or having its makeup, its isolated identity, altered.*

Not so with transferred values. First of all, the presence of transferred values means that some quality or feature from an independent source has been *transferred into* the makeup of a normally unconnected thing or situation. Moreover, what transferred values accomplish is, we might say, the very opposite of what relationships do: far from changing in any manner the nature or identity of the thing or situation involved, their presence makes that thing or situation more precise, more specific, takes it out of a generic category by rendering it more distinctively "it" and no other. The translucent blue patch in the above example may, for instance, acquire such an "itness" by virtue of the viewer's transferring into the patch, in his perception of the translucency, the particular kind of translucency he may have known from such things as a visit to the Chartres cathedral, with its windows of Gothic stained glass, or from

*The two colors together may read as a purple—this is, in fact, the principle of optical fusion upon which the Impressionists built their technique—but neither color has itself been changed.

his experience of a blue Stiegel glass saltcellar; hence, the blue with the quality of translucency is not merely that, but, more precisely, that blue with the translucency *of* Chartres stained glass or *of* Stiegel glass. Again, when, *entre nous*, at The Barnes Foundation, we refer to Modigliani's painting "*Haricot Rouge*"* (Plate 11) as "The Beehive" or to Cézanne's "Provence Woman" (Plate 2) as "Potato Face," we not only identify readily each picture, but do so by a transferred quality that points up a distinctive, actual characteristic of each canvas—the general configuration of the tiered, cone-shaped hairdo in the Modigliani, the rugged, lumpy modelling of the face in the Cézanne.

Such meanings that result from the transferring of values have, as we indicated, a personal element in them.† They arise not only from the perception of the native qualities of the thing observed (as with the particular blue and its translucency), but also from the viewer's background knowledge (as of certain pieces of glass) and from his imagination (as from his ability to draw the relationship between the qualities perceived in the blue patch and pieces of glass seen elsewhere). And these meanings can exist in the blue patch only for those who have also known the particular or similar pieces of glass. This personal element in transferred values, then, comes about because transferred values depend for their existence in an experienced situation not only on the imagination of the creator of that situation, but also on that of the one responding to it, on his past experiences and on his ability to discover pertinent relationships between what he has known and the new which he seeks to know—here, the translucency peculiar to Chartres and Stiegel glass, now recalled as it helps to reveal the particular kind of translucency of the blue patch.

**Haricot Rouge* ("Red Bean" or "Kidney Bean"), the sobriquet of Modigliani's red-headed and possibly also tall and lanky sitter, is in itself an example of transferred values.

†Despite the subjective element in transferred values, they are objective in the sense that they are verifiable in the objective situation itself by other individuals responding to it with adequate and relevant knowledge, fertile imagination and an understanding of the meaning and function of transferred values.

The case of simple relationships is different, for the meanings they produce belong indelibly to the perceived object or situation. Their action results, as it were, in *facts*, qualitative or not, of identity: the blue patch is and remains translucent, whether the viewer is seeing it and its translucency for the first or the fiftieth time or not at all and whether or not he has seen Chartres or Stiegel glass, and it is translucent for everyone who has known translucency in general. Likewise, the blue patch is and remains, so long as it is juxtaposed to the red one, that particular shade of greenish-blue, and the boy, by the mere existence of the sibling, is and remains a brother. Moreover, while transferred values reside in the effects brought about by relationships—as is the case of the Chartres or Stiegel glass with reference to the translucency of the blue—the effects of relationships do not necessarily involve transferred values: the boy's acquired identity of "brother" exists as a result of the relationship of the boy to his parents' new baby, but it does not elicit any transferred values.

The effects of relationships, then, belong to the entity or situation: the greenish-blue hue, the translucency are there, available to perception insofar as each of us is capable of perceiving; and "brother" is an inseparable part of the boy's intrinsic identity. Transferred values, on the other hand, are both *of the thing* or situation *and of us*: yes, we see the quality of certain pieces of glass in the blue patch because of what is there, but we see it also because of what we have experienced on other occasions, and we could not have seen that quality of glass without the knowledge that belongs to these other specific and specifically recalled experiences and without our own imaginative capabilities.

With relationships, as we noted, the constituents induce changes in the identity and nature of each other. Transferred values, in contrast, must be made to occur, imaginatively or concretely, by an outside agency, and the process involves a transfer of features or qualities that specify the constituents to this or that degree, but do so always in terms of the medium of expression. In this respect, the dark color band which frequently outlines the

color units in Cézanne (*e.g.,* Plate 71), Rouault (*e.g.,* Plate 29) and Matisse (*e.g.,* Fold-out Plate 78) creates in the paintings of all three artists a color and a light-and-dark relationship that sets off the color units so enclosed. In Cézanne, moreover, the "what" and the "how" of the relationship result in the band directly helping to set off and to push forward a fully three-dimensional volume of color; in Rouault, the areas are less three-dimensional, and the dark band broader and gradually dissolving into the area it surrounds; while, in Matisse, the "what" and the "how" of the relationship is such that it is the color of the color—the yellowness of the yellow, the redness of the red, and so on—that is forcefully emphasized by the dark band outlining the shape of each color area.

These varied effects are due, of course, to the relationships to be perceived in the respective "what" and "how" of each canvas. Even if we were to go on with our account of these effects and, indeed, exhaust the possibilities, there would still be more that differentiates these color bands, but all the differences can be simply accounted for by the transferred values they give rise to in each case—among others, such distinctive features as the evenly delineated and relatively narrow metal partition in *cloisonné* work that is a transferred value in Cézanne; the broad and irregular leading of stained glass in Rouault, which melts into the color so enframed and helps to give it the smouldering character of some incandescent stuff; and the setting for a gem that emphasizes the brilliant colorfulness of its semi-precious stone in Matisse.

In our discussion so far, we have focussed our observations about the contribution of transferred values to the meaning of works of art on only one facet of their identity—*viz.*, their identity as values, characteristics, qualities, drawn from the personal knowledge of broad human qualities an individual would have acquired from his past experiences which are brought into and made to qualify, through its own general qualities and characteristics, a presently experienced object or situation. In this rôle, as we saw, they come in, in our study of the art in painting, as

subjective, but nonetheless objectifiable, factors to enhance and deepen our perception of the objective characteristics of the canvas before us. To recall, for instance, an example from our study of Soutine's "Gourdon" (Plate 6): what we might all see in a general way as the dramatic activity or sweep of the top branch of the tree becomes a more specific and significant drama when we are able to transfer into it from our own experience such a meaning as, say, the soaring of an eagle—neither of which event or creature is actually pictured, but which is brought to mind by the particular nature of the dramatic sweep of the unit and which, in turn, once perceived, puts its own meaning into, becomes part of, the expressive statement.

Such transferred values as those described above qualify, as we said, the expressiveness of what is perceived and, for this reason, may well be termed *expressive transferred values*. Depending on the character of their sources and of the new effects created, expressive transferred values may include predominantly decorative and expressively decorative transferred values, as well as more strictly expressive characteristics. The *decorative transferred values* occur whenever the nature of the expressive transferred values is of an essentially sensuous character, as, for example, the color brightness and exoticism of Japanese woodcut prints in van Gogh's paintings or the allover pattern of small color units of Byzantine mosaics or the pebbliness of a pebbly beach in the work of Maurice Prendergast. Expressive transferred values, including those that are essentially decorative, are part and parcel of our ultimate grasp of the meaning of a work of art with regard to both its unique identity and its significance in terms of the traditions of painting. Functionally, they come in at the end-phase of perception to qualify and make specific the broad human values already discovered.

Lest our use of this terminology lead to a misunderstanding among our readers of the distinction between expressive *transferred* values, decorative or other, and expressive values *per se*, decorative or other, we shall

digress briefly to review their respective rôles in the process of perception. When we and/or Soutine arrived at the expressive transferred value of the soaring of an eagle to identify a meaning in "Gourdon," we/he did so not because "soaring of an eagle" is depicted, but because the expressive values portrayed—the sweep (of the top branch of the tree), the drama (of its activity)—connected in our/his mind with a kind of sweep we/he had experienced in another guise—*i.e.,* in an eagle's flight. The "soaring of an eagle," then, is a meaning we have/he has already encountered. And the sweep and the drama that led us/him to transfer it into "Gourdon" are *of* the painting, objectively of its aesthetic identity, there for all of us to see regardless of what other specific experiences of sweep and drama we might have had. In short, expressive values are those qualities brought into being by the artist's particular handling of his means; *transferred* expressive values are derived from the artist's and our experiences of expressive values as they are embodied in other actualities than the canvas before us, now elicited more or less in their entirety by the recurrence of the expressive quality itself.

The concept of expressive transferred values, decorative or other, however, covers only one kind of transferred values, for it accounts for only one aspect of their application to perception. In fact, transferring of value goes on throughout the entire perceptive process, beginning almost simultaneously with the first sense registration and carrying through every step of our comprehension of the meanings of the painting before us.

To see how this is so, we can begin with what it is that sense registration acts upon, *i.e.*, the factual matter on the canvas—nothing more nor less than units of color, some of which are recognizable as, perhaps, being, saying, blue, yellow, angularity, fluidity, opacity, translucency, this or that size, length or width, and so on. Left alone, merely, that is, registered, they are what they are and say, by what they are, what they can say, and nothing else. No case of

transferred values here, but factual matter and attributes for anyone to see and acknowledge.

As our eyes register what is there, *we* cannot but begin to function, leading us, perforce, to add onto the initial sense report what we call *plastic characteristics*—three-dimensionality, for instance, relative location in space or depth, contrast of light and dark colors, and such—which give the matter registered further identity. Such features are, we know, derived from the relationships that exist among the various color units on the canvas: an area of light color interacting with an area of dark in such relationship that the dark functions as shading, or an area overlapping or intercepting the view of another area, or lines converging towards a common point, etc., all may give rise to a sense of three-dimensionality on a flat, two-dimensional surface. But, while it is true that the sense of three-dimensionality is a consequence of the relationship of dark to light, of overlapping or of linear perspective, that is not the whole answer. In actuality, each relationship is merely a flat pattern, and it is *we* who, because that pattern has occurred in other of our experiences as a feature of three-dimensionality, transfer into the two-dimensional presentation before us the value, the meaning, it has elsewhere informed us of.

So it is that the perception of the meanings or qualities of a painting involve also a transferring of values, albeit of a sort different from the transferring of expressive values: in the case of *plastic*, but not expressive, *transferred values*, the meanings transferred, are almost unavoidably done, so long, that is, as the viewer has had any relevant experience of the world around him to draw upon. Indeed, when, in a painting, we see what in everyday experience is an indicator of three-dimensionality, we see a three-dimensional unit, even in violation of our intellectual understanding—a point graphically brought home by the well-known optical illusion of specifically arranged dark and light diamond shapes, which we are unable to read any way but three-dimensionally.

There is also this to say: plastic transferred values occur

in painting, as we indicated above, as effects, attributes, created by the artist with his basic means of color that impart a general identity to his canvas. These values, effects, attributes, are, in essence, factual in nature in the sense that they determine the visual makeup, the basic matter, of the painted surface—its degree and kind of space, for instance, its degree and/or kind of three-dimensionality, of light and dark, of shapes and their placement, of linear demarcations, etc. As such, plastic transferred values are a part of the artist's means, subsidiary to the primary means of color, for they are color-made. But, like color, they are a tool, an instrument, an agent rather than an end, for the artist's expression of broad human values, which, in their turn, qualify the plastic values. Thus it is that color which has this or that degree of brightness may be made to appear to glow; a unit that is elongated and undulates may seem to sweep; a light juxtaposed to a dark may yield an effect of drama. The effects—the glow, the sweep, the drama—are meanings that come in to qualify the plastic transferred values and that give the painting some of *its* meaning as an aesthetic object.

What is true of the plastic aspect of a visual entity is also true of its illustrative aspect: again, perception of identity involves a transferring of values. A blob of yellow, for instance, has its own factual existence in that it is recognizable as a blob of yellow not by way of transferred values of any sort, but by way of classification with what we have known as blobs of yellow. As it enters into relationships with its context, it may, by way of plastic transferred values, take on such characteristics as three-dimensionality, hardness or softness of substance, brightness or muted tonality of color, ruggedness or smoothness of texture, etc.; it may appear to float or to sit weightily upon a base, to project or to recede, to tip off its center of gravity or to be in equilibrium, and so on. And, further, because of its particular plastic qualities, in conjunction with our own knowledge of the visual world, we may transfer into what is a blob of yellow color with this or that shape, texture and other plastic characteristics the *illustrative*

transferred meaning of, perhaps, a lemon, a mound of butter, a tennis ball—this meaning, too, like the plastic meanings, more or less unavoidably arrived at.*

Again, illustrative transferred values serve as one more of the artist's means. In themselves, they constitute another element of the "factual" identity of the canvas, carrying the plastic transferred values a step further by making them adhere to, connect with, specify, define, recognizable things. And, once more, these kinds of trans-

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*Transferred values are also, in this sense, at the foundation of the various forms of symbolic communication. The word "apple," for instance, written or sounded, has for us the meaning of an apple even though none be present; likewise does the figure "9"—a circle with a line extended downward from its side at the right—have the meaning of, stand for, symbolize, a particular quantity, as does the term "H_2O" signify water. And, in each case, meaning is acquired by the symbol through transferred values: from our store of knowledge, our past experiences of things and situations in the world, we transfer into those syllables or series of letters, that shaped line, that combination of letters and number—at their inception as well as at their occurrence henceforth—the meaning of apple, the quantity nine, the elements and the relationship between those elements that produces water.

Nevertheless, unlike those forms of expression in which the meaning conveyed is one with the nature, the character, of the means used (*e.g.,* painting and music), symbolic expression is in code—the English language "code," the "code" of mathematics, the "code" of science, and so on. That is, the means of symbolic expression acquire meaning only by virtue of common agreement among those who use them, and not, for the most part, because they share any intrinsic feature or quality with the things, actions, quantities, etc., that they represent: to French-speaking people, the word "apple" will not stand for the object apple, nor will the figure "9" convey the quantity nine to someone unused to the numerical system to which it belongs.

An occasional symbol does retain in itself a connection with, does have within its own makeup transferred values of, what it stands for—as a road sign of two bands that cross at right angles stands for a crossroads, or the Roman numeral III for a set of three, or the word "buzz" for the sound of certain vibrations. In these cases, however, the transferred values are, so to speak, literal or synonymous rather than enriching—*i.e.,* the meaning of the symbol and its transferred value are one and the same, as opposed, for example, to transferred values, plastic, illustrative or expressive, of a painting, wherein the transferred values supplement the significance of the means. Thus, in a painting, what is perceived as a yellow blob of color acquires through transferring of value, say, three-dimensionality, lemonness and harvest-moon glow, yet is still a two-dimensional yellow blob of color; a pair of crossed bands, on the other hand, *is,* visually, a crossroads; the figure "III" *is* a group of three units; the word "buzz" *is* a vocal re-production of the sound of insect wings against the air.

When symbols in and of themselves are transferred values, then, it is because they re-produce some actual feature of what they represent, not because they are

ferred values are not in themselves expressive, but are vehicles for broad human values that, in turn, too, qualify them. Thus does a yellow oval, illustratively reading as "lemon," that expresses glow become not merely a represented lemon, the meaning of which is only "factual," *i.e.*, confined to our registering and recognizing it. It becomes also a lemon the meaning of which involves us, the viewer, as it did the artist in his expression of it, in an experience that the expressive quality, by its nature, its power to arouse our intellectual, emotional, imaginative interest, evokes.

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capable of translating an expressed idea from one medium to another. And while this may seem obvious, it is a point often forgotten or not understood, notably, among art critics, who are wont to confuse, among other things, the meaning of a painting with its title. For them, therefore, does Picasso's "Guernica" (Plate 53) express the violence and horror of Franco's destruction of an undefended town, despite the highly decorative drama of its dark-light contrasts, of its linear motifs and of its pattern of clear-cut shapes; though, had it been called, say, "A Bull in a China Shop" or "Composition #3," no doubt it would, to these critics, have meant something else. So, too, does the expressive merit of the Surrealists seem, for such art critics, to lie in the imaginative titles that are attached to the canvasses, and the canvasses themselves, despite whatever intrinsic expressiveness they may possess, are not seen for what they are in terms of the use of the painter's medium.

Among the same critics are those who actually do look at the canvasses rather than just at their titles and misunderstand the significance of the "symbolism" they find there, which significance they equate with the significance of the painting—the more esoteric the better. Such symbolism does have its place and can offer material for a fascinating study, but its presence in a painting does not necessarily fulfill the demands of art. In fact, the "symbolic" contents of a painting is but an aspect of its illustrativeness: the things depicted are not there, but, in a manner of speaking, symbolized (though, perhaps, more accurately we should say that illustrativeness in painting consists in re-presenting, presenting in a different guise, portrayable attributes of things). In a still life of fruit on a table, as an example, neither fruit nor table is there on the canvas, but only specific color units into which the painter transferred, by the shapes, colors, etc., he used, such characteristics as "fruitness" and "tableness," and this made these units not *be*, but *say*, stand for, function as symbols of, fruit and table.

Insofar, however, as the "symbolic," the illustrative, contents is made the meaning of a painting, that painting is mere illustration, inevitably lacking significance, standing only for what exists elsewhere. In short, it is not art, anymore than a sequence of nouns is poetry or literature. And those who see only the "symbolism," or see the symbols as a meaning of the painting, fail to understand that the illustrative matter in a work of art has meaning not as an end, but as a means to the expression.

And so we come, of course, back to the expressive transferred values. Now the three-dimensional lemon that was, in the initial sense report, but a bright yellow blob, may, because of the way it is presented, offer characteristics of its plastic effect (three-dimensionality) and its illustrative, symbolic, identity (lemonness) that result in expressive values, as *vivid*, *warm*, *glowing* yellow lemon; and these expressive values open the way for the viewer, in his perception of the unit, to transfer into the yellow, three-dimensional lemon certain qualities of things known elsewhere, as the intensity, for one viewer, of the yellow of an egg yolk, for another, of a harvest moon and, for still another, of sulphur or of an autumn leaf of a tulip tree.

Of the three categories of transferred values, those of the first kind—the plastic values—are predictable in the case of the majority of adult viewers: they are made up of consistently recurring characteristics that everyone with experience of the world to some degree recognizes, so that the presence of these characteristics on a canvas leads almost inevitably to the transferrence of a given, more or less universal plastic meaning. So, too, with illustrative values, save that they are predictable only up to a point; there are people who have never been confronted with a lemon or a table or even a house or a tree and do not, therefore, possess the specific knowledge of the identity of such things from which to draw for a transfer of meaning.* The third category of transferred values, the expressive ones, are essentially unpredictable. Unlike plastic and illustrative values, they have no factual identity, but stem from the expressive values, the meanings of the qualities, belonging to visual actuality: a unit that says lemon on a canvas continues to say lemon rather than moon, however strongly one might see in its color the transferred value of

*As was the case, mentioned on an earlier occasion, of members of an inland African tribe who, upon being shown a photograph of a ship at sea, were able to discern only a pattern—this, it was surmised, because they had never experienced the sight of either a ship or the ocean.

the intensity of the glow of a harvest moon.* Nor do we perceive expressive transferred values as a natural consequence of having interacted with the world around us, for they involve an active, a creative use of our individual capacities for intelligence, imagination, sensitivity and interest, all brought to bear on our own unique background of experience. But, while subjective in that sense, expressive transferred values are, nevertheless, as we already mentioned, objective by being objectifiable, justifiable, by their appropriateness to the expressive meanings that are of the canvas.

There is also this to note with regard to what differentiates plastic, illustrative and expressive transferred values from each other. It is that plastic transferred values are relatively imprecise as to what of the world they are derived from and are more or less familiar to all of us: using, again, the example of three-dimensionality, each of us has met with it in many guises in a vast, if not infinite, variety of experiences, and it is more or less constant in its basic meaning and presentation. With illustrative transferred values, in contrast, the range of sources in the world of things experienced is restricted, in each instance of a recognizable entity, to those bearing specific intrinsic marks of identification: the quality of lemonness can be transferred into a painted unit only from our encounters, if we have had them, with that thing we know as lemon, just as tableness can be made to label a certain arrangement of shapes on a canvas only if we have known of such

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*It might be noted in passing that the intensity of the yellow of the lemon is equally of the lemon depicted by the artist (*i.e.*, an illustrative transferred value) *and* of harvest moon (*i.e.*, an expressive transferred value). In other words, the distinction between expressive transferred values and those of an illustrative sort is one that depends on the reference point used as we perceive a given quality and its meaning. Yet neither value replaces the other, for neither gives the whole meaning of the unit under consideration: perceiving the glow as *of* the lemon is essential to our seeing the artist's expression, but it is not enough; for, without also seeing the expressive transferred values—the glow, for instance, of the harvest moon—we miss the richness, the fullness, the range of that expression. Simply put, without expressive transferred values, we have less to go on; we ignore an entire aspect of the expressiveness of a work of art, as if we listened only to the melody line of a Bach piece and did not hear or acknowledge the counterpoint.

arrangements as they have occurred in tables in our past experience, and not in lemons or other objects. And, in the case of expressive transferred values, in contradistinction to that of both the plastic and the illustrative, there is no factual connection with actuality made, but a connection between the *meanings*, the broad human qualities, of our experience of the painted canvas and of other things and situations from our past. These values, then, are unpredictable; they may originate in any kind of experience and may vary *ad infinitum*: thus may the object we would all, given any normal common human experience, identify through a transferring of virtually inevitable plastic and illustrative values as a bright, solid, three-dimensional lemon come to have, because of the nature of its expressive characteristics, qualities, values, transferred by one or another viewer or by the artist himself, from such disparate sources as, say, a harvest moon, an egg yolk, sulphur, tree leaves or Venetian paintings—each one as "right" as the others and all, though personal, objectifiable, hence, objective.

And, finally, once more to summarize the relationship between expressive values and expressive transferred values, we shall point out the fact that, while the yellow unit that says lemon may express color intensity and glow, that intensity becomes ever so much more specific when the particular intensity of the yellow harvest moon and the particular color glow of Venetian painting, etc., are transferred into it.*

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As was shown in an earlier discussion of our topic, the expressive transferred values that were suggested in Soutine's "Gourdon" (Plate 6) help to bring out with

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*What we have said of transferred values in our visual perception applies to their occurrence in our other perceptions as well: our ear does not register that a sound is nearby or far off; it is *we* who confer, transfer, that meaning into the heard sound and may further transfer into the same sound the specific meaning of a bird's song or of a lulling lullaby or of the wind blowing through the trees or of the cry of a wounded animal. Likewise with our sense of taste, of touch and of

emphasis the distinctive, poignantly dramatic *expressiveness* of the canvas.* In contrast, an analytical study of Matisse's "Blue Still Life" (Fold-out Plate 78), as we shall presently undertake, will lead to a set of transferred values—plastic, illustrative, and expressive and decorative—directed to enhance and reinforce the individuality of the expressive *decorativeness* of the artist's presentation.

Since we are considering Matisse from the point of view of transferred values after having studied Soutine's

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smell: *we* are the ones who transfer into these sensations such qualities or meanings as sourness, sweetness, of vinegar or of molasses, as the case may be; roughness, smoothness, of tree-bark or of satin; acridity, fragrancy, of burning chemicals or of flowers. *We*, that is, rather than our senses, *we*, with our background of experiences, our knowledge, our sensitivity, interest, intelligence and imagination, "pin on the labels"—and pinning on the labels amounts to the transferring into the sense report meanings known from their having been experienced on past occasions.

In all the arts, too, it is the occurrence of transferred values and the perception of their effects that ultimately allow us to grasp the identity of the created, the experienced, thing or situation: in dance, we recognize and know *Pavlova's* Swan or *Ulanova's* or *Chauviret's*—each one a different, unique, entity; we go to the theater to see not just Hamlet, but *Gielgud's* Hamlet or *Burton's* or to see *Laughton's* Henry VIII; in music we choose to listen to the jazz of *Oscar Peterson* and to *Tchaikovsky's* Beethoven or *Stokowski's,* for each has its own expressive meaning as a result of what has been transferred, into the original score, of the personality, the imagination, the sensitivity, etc., of the particular performer and conductor; in sculpture, the figures of Giacometti take on something of the meaning of trees; in architecture, steeples may "soar" to the sky, and, although we do not look for lace in Gothic structures, we find a laciness in the tracery, as we do not look for, but still find, "demons" in Soutine's "Gourdon" (Plate 6) and "stained glass" in Matisse's "Blue Still Life" (Fold-out Plate 78) and "snow flakes" or moonbeams or a floating pattern of illuminated "shreds of lace" on and around the photographed figure shown on Plate 1, the creative work of an ingeniously inventive artist-photographer. Soufflés all standing up in like pride of their fluffy delicacy—yet one will have the "touch" of Bocuse, another the "*cachet*" of Point, yet another the "itness" of Henri Soulé; it will be *your* soufflé, it will be *mine*—and that "touch," that "*cachet,*" that "itness" each time will be due, of course, to the specific quality transferred into the soufflé's creation.

Again, the associative method employed in various courses in memory training relies on basic principles and tenets either similar in essence or bearing a strong affinity to those which govern the process of transferred values. Thus, for example, is one instructed to keep straight who is Mrs. Collins and who Mrs. Hollins, both of a similar size, coloration, etc., by noting, say, of Mrs. Collins that she has a round face and narrow eyes and picturing her in a *coolie* hat, and of Mrs. Hollins that she has deep, *hollow* eye sockets, and so on.

* Violette de Mazia, "Transferred Values: Part II," *Vistas,* Spring-Summer, 1979, pp. 10–39.

"Gourdon" from this same vantage, it should be of some interest to compare the Soutine with "Blue Still Life." Although obviously different from each other, the two paintings have a number of broad characteristics in common. For one thing, each of them departs, and departs far, from the traditional, the conventional, way of seeing, of saying, of doing things in pictures. That is to say, both artists were innovators, pathfinders, and their paintings tend towards the bizarre: in the two canvasses selected, there are effects that have shocked, and at times still do shock, the academically entrenched.

Is "Blue Still Life" less bizarre than "Gourdon"? Bizarre is a relative, not an intrinsic, characteristic; it is relative to what we are used to. And it is a fact that Matisse's work, on the whole, is less bizarre now than it was at the turn of the century or in 1907, when "Blue Still Life" was painted: the picture has not changed, but the public's attitude has.*

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*In the France of 1907, things were not very different from what they were in Philadelphia in the early 'twenties, at which time people in the art world, including the so-called critics, condemned Dr. Barnes as "a perverter of public morals" for having and exhibiting such paintings as Matisse's "Blue Still Life" and branded the course in the philosophy and appreciation of art given at The Barnes Foundation as "insidious bolshevism."

Indeed, France of the early nineteen hundreds, to which the ideals in art were Cabanel (*e.g.,* Plate 36) and Bouguereau (*e.g.,* Plate 30), with Impressionism as runner-up or heir-apparent to their popularity, still widely upheld the condemnation in 1875 of Manet as "a dare-devil rebel, to be cast out of decent circles of art and society"—for . . . having committed the heinous crime of painting blue the white linen sheet in his "The Wash" (Plate 5). It is easy, then, to imagine the reception that greeted such a work as "Blue Still Life" and the choice invectives ("charlatan," "impostor," "art criminal," "apostle of the ugly") thrown at Matisse and members of his group when it appeared.

At the *Salon d'Automne* exhibit in 1905 of paintings by Matisse and others of his group, Claribel Cone, of the two sisters in Baltimore who shortly after began to assemble what grew into a sizable collection of Matisse's works, is alleged to have reacted to what she saw there with the comment, incredulously delivered, "Surely, we are not expected to take this art seriously."

To give some further perspective on what was happening in art at the time when "Blue Still Life" was painted, we might briefly note the following: Cézanne had died the preceding year, in 1906, having just completed "Nudes in Landscape" (Plate 69); Renoir was reaching his latest stage, which was not generally accepted, with "Promenade" (Plate 4), of 1906; and Picasso was inflicting his own shock on the public—he was through with his "blue" and his "rose" periods and, in 1907, painted "The Girls of Avignon" (Plate 16).

It still remains that, to most people then and to some even now, Matisse was and is "outrageous." "Is *that* a table?" "Look at the cockeyed perspective!" "A cloth could not look like that, fruit could not be that color." In fact, so startled was the art world by work of this sort that Matisse and his group were labeled "Fauves" ("wild beasts")*—a name which stuck as a result of a pun made by Louis Vauxcelles.†

By 1907, however, the Fauve movement as such had spent itself: Derain and de Vlaminck were painting their respective imitations of Picasso and Cézanne; Rouault and Dufy were moving along their own directions; and Matisse, likewise, was developing his own style, but one based on, rather than departing from, the Fauves' innovations, which themselves had stemmed in the main from the bright color areas and bold patterns of van Gogh (*e.g.,* Plate 22) and Gauguin (*e.g.,* Plate 65) and the exotic decorativeness of arabesques and color relationships these two painters had adapted from Japanese woodcut prints (*e.g.,* Plates 26 and 27). And, as ever happens, the strangeness lost its acuteness: as William James said, "We dislike the new, and we like what we know." Thus, some studied Matisse's work, got to know it, which made it more or less acceptable; and a gradual acclimatization, and, rarely, a real appreciation, followed. Even nowadays, only a relatively limited number of people understand what Matisse has done, while the majority accept his work because they have become accustomed to it as part of the art setting, or else they profess to like it because it is now the fashion to like it.

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*Among the other principal Fauves were Braque, Raoul Dufy, Derain, Friesz, Manguin, Marquet, Rouault, Valtat, de Vlaminck, van Dongen and de Waroquier.

†At one of the *Salon des Indépendants* exhibitions were some innocuous sculpture by Albert Marque which were exhibited with the paintings. The story goes that, in his comment on the show, which featured works in the genre of "Blue Still Life," Vauxcelles, making reference to the sculpture surrounded by such pictures, quipped, *"Donatello parmi les Fauves"* ("Donatello among the wild beasts"—something equivalent to "Daniel in the lion's den").

Indeed, Matisse's effects have themselves become a fashion, a style that has invaded and transformed the visual aspect of a great variety of manufactured things, not to mention the impact of these effects on the many imitators who serve up second- to tenth-hand versions of his ideas. His influence has so extended into the decorative arts in general that it has molded their character on a wholesale commercial scale, creatively and non-creatively, as may be seen in stage sets, window displays, posters, textiles, advertisements of all sorts, interior decoration, packaging material, wall coverings, and so on (*e.g.,* Plates 8 and 12). Matisse's effects may have likewise been instrumental in the recent revival of folk-art things, which capitalize on Matisse's now popular patterns of bright colors. And Matisse himself designed chasubles, window panes, religious objects, a rug and other textiles (*e.g.,* Plates 9 and 54).

All of this further attuned the eye to his ideas and is much the reason that Matisse is no longer so strange to us and seems less strange than Soutine, who, for most people, is still "simply crazy." We have seen fewer Soutines, and there are fewer painters influenced by him and fewer phases of life that reflect his influence. We would be hard put to find a window display or a stage set or upholstery fabric that is derived from Soutine's painting, although a beginning in this regard can occasionally be seen (*e.g.,* Plate 7); and there is also among contemporary painters a growing crop of Soutine emulators whose work usually masquerades under the high-sounding name Expressionism, such as Jack Levine, Boris Deutsch and Hyman Bloom—painters who have seized on the shell, the grotesque distortions, and have failed to see the significance of the color in Soutine and of the distinctive expressiveness of his distortions.

Yet another reason for which Soutine is still so bizarre to us is that we are less familiar, also, with some of the picture ideas (not with his subject—we have seen as many trees as we have seen fruit) that he develops, *i.e.,* with the sources of the characteristics which he transfers into the familiar subject and which, thus, create bizarre associations.

Matisse and Soutine, so different from each other, are similar, too, in that, to an open-minded spectator sensitive to human and aesthetic values and having an understanding of what an artist in general does, both are exciting. Whether we like their paintings or not, they compel our attention. We do not leave them alone: they do not leave us alone. Irrespective of our personal preference, we cannot but feel stirred up about them, with, again of both, color as the most immediate agent arousing our reaction. That is, we are struck straightway and lastingly by color itself, and decidedly more so than we are by line, space or volume.*

From this point of view, a difference between the two artists is to be noted. In Soutine it is the *texture* and the dramatic *movement* of the color (due in large measure to his technique) that work hard on us, that grip us deeply and arouse a depth of emotion in us; the familiar has acquired an intense, a fervent poignancy and drama, and the color as applied on the canvas is expressive of that. In Matisse, familiar objects are relatively closer to their known shapes, although they are no less distorted for that. But, contrary to the dramatically movemented power of the color in Soutine, Matisse's color is extraordinarily, strikingly eye-catching, eye-entertaining—our eye can feast on it; it is the *color* of the color that strikes, the decorative succession of the reds, the blues, the yellows, and so on.

Yet, while the overall effect in Matisse is highly sensuous, it is also representative, illustrative, to quite a degree, with a directness and a boldness to it, though also with extreme distortions. With Matisse, as with Soutine, there are, as we mentioned, departures from the literal subject facts; and, furthermore, with both are there departures from the distortions that we are accustomed to, as, for instance, those we find and readily accept in the paintings

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*This is not the case every time of all painters: Degas (*e.g.,* Plate 63) in one way, in some of his oils, and Botticelli (*e.g.,* Plate 15), in another, say their say more directly by relying on what the linear element does; in Perugino (*e.g.,* Plate 59), Claude (*e.g.,* Plate 60), Henri Rousseau (*e.g.,* Plate 61), Seurat (*e.g.,* Plate 58) and de Chirico (*e.g.,* Plate 50), it is deep space that dominates the ensemble; and color volumes it is that are the mainstay in both Renoir (*e.g.,* Plate 4) and Cézanne (*e.g.,* Plate 71).

of Tintoretto (*e.g.*, Plate 32) and Chardin (*e.g.*, Plate 34). If we were to ask whether Matisse is less distorted than Soutine, we might be tempted to answer that he is; but, upon analysis, we would find that Soutine's distortions shock less by reason of his departing from subject facts than by reason of his departing dramatically from the conventional way of departing, while Matisse's distortions are of a type that we are now, as we just observed, used to.

Matisse's units are more easily recognizable than those of Soutine, but this, again, does not mean that they are for that less distorted. It is true, however, that the *shape* of Matisse's units is less distorted than that in Soutine's, which condition makes for easier identification. And it is a feature of human nature that, for whatever psychological kink there be in us, we get a bigger jolt when the shape and proportions of things are altered than we do when liberties are taken with their color, perspective, outline or three-dimensionality: when we change shape and proportions, something in us rebels.* So it is that we tend to say that Soutine is more distorted than Matisse.

There are, in actuality, gross departures in Matisse's "Blue Still Life" from the known facts of the subject: never have we known fruit to have such color, texture, shape or to appear in the perspective shown. At the same time, we have ourselves experienced such things partaking of an eye-entertaining character not unlike that which we meet with in this painting: we have bought fancy tablecloths and decorative screens; we have used and enjoyed looking at

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*Manet's flatness (*e.g.*, Plate 10), for instance, does not disturb us, and the flattened volumes in Soutine and Matisse easily pass muster. A colored contour-band in Dufy (*e.g.*, Plate 55), Cézanne (*e.g.*, Plate 71), Tintoretto (*e.g.*, Plate 32), Soutine and Matisse hardly strikes us as a distortion at all, since we have seen it so often, from prehistoric cave paintings (*e.g.*, Plate 62) on: the convention of distorting has not been violated, and, therefore, we do not realize that the subject facts have been departed from. Similarly in the case of color: change it, and we are amused rather than shocked, although it does, perhaps, startle us a bit more than do distortions of line and three-dimensionality. But, when we change the shape and proportions of things, as did, for instance, El Greco (*e.g.*, Plate 35) and Soutine (*e.g.*, Plate 6), then we do become more acutely aware of the distortions wrought upon them, at least more so than when three-dimensionality, color or outline are altered.

decorative centerpieces made up of fruit or flowers; and we have refrained from eating the fruit in such arrangements because our eye was "eating it up," feasting on the sight—for some of us more than for others, to be sure, and in some circumstances more than in others. Matisse, obviously, was one who revelled in such characteristics and in what happened to him because of them and, also, in what happened to them because of him and what he brought to bear upon them, even as he just looked with interest, feelings, imagination, etc., and in the light of color experiences and others he had previously had.

As always in imaginative perception, departures cannot but occur, be they as subtle as those in Chardin (*e.g.,* Plate 34) (with regard to perspective and highlights) or as bold as those in Matisse. The motive, the reason, is always the same—a departing from the subject facts for the sake of arriving at specific aesthetic facts.

Now let us consider "Blue Still Life" and the transferred values that were there for Matisse and are there for us, the viewer of his painting. First of all, of course, we must look, or, rather, not merely look, but look at the painting and into it with our own eyes and mind and imagination and *pertinent* background knowledge.*

Initially, when we look at "Blue Still Life," we see a great variety of colors—dark ones, light ones—all of them

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*This injunction may appear to some of us as childish, but, in truth, very few of us do that elementary but necessary thing—a fact borne out time and again. There was, for example, a "critic" who said of Gladys Rockmore Davis that she painted just like Renoir *because* she, too, lived at Cagnes. That "critic" had looked at her biography and at Renoir's, but not at their paintings. He might well and more justifiably have said that "she painted just like Renoir for, like Renoir, she, too, dipped her brush in turpentine and applied pigments to the canvas"—the equivalent of what an astute music-critic said of a mediocre violin performer, to wit, that "he played his violin just like Jascha Heifetz: he held it under his chin." And, for another "authority" in the field of art who failed, in this case, to see anything in a painting beyond its subject is the lecturer on the art of Goya who projected a slide of one of the artist's works which depicts a monk seated in the woods counting his money and remarked of the work, "Poor fellow, he can't take it with him." That lecturer had looked at the subject, not at the painting—and he looked no further, for that is all that he said about the Goya.

forming an ensemble that is preponderantly bright and high-key. Considering their distribution and the relationships established among them, we find that there is an overall plan, an underlying structure, a scaffolding, a framework or, to put it simply, a compositional pattern that involves the illusion of deep space and that involves the decorative, the illustrative and the expressive aspects of the color units.*

More specifically of the compositional arrangement of this painting, there is, to begin with, a large-scale mapping out of the surface into three main areas, within which exists a sufficiency of a suggestion of things that we know—"tablecloth,"† fruit, pots, urn, screen. Each of these areas is such and all are so related among themselves that each contrasts as to subject and relationship to space with the others. As we note the contrasts, we are nonetheless aware also of the back-and-forth working together of

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*Because confusion often occurs in distinguishing the illustrative aspect from the expressive, so that one is mistaken for the other, and in the hope of facilitating the reader's understanding of the differences among the various categories of transferred values, we had thought, in the drafting of this analysis of Matisse's "Blue Still Life," to try, and we did try, to make use of the layout of the page and block, in its own separate column, each kind of transferred value involved in our discussion. We were soon convinced that our plan was impossible of fulfillment, that it was a task fraught, as it would have to have been, with repeatedly occurring indecision and wavering conclusions as to where, in which column, a particular transferred value brought out in the text belonged.

This problem pointed up, of course, the fact that the categories of transferred values overlap each other, mesh or merge, even though transferred values of one or another kind may, and frequently do, prevail over the others. The effect of three-dimensionality, for example, from one point of view a plastic transferred value, can also be, from another point of view, an expressive one; and to impart, say, to a yellow oval unit the essentials and the meaning of lemonness and also the glowing quality of the harvest moon is to identify that unit by means of transferred values that are both plastic and illustrative, as well as expressive and decorative. Plastic transferred values, moreover, are bound to co-exist with the others, for, whatever illustrative, expressive or decorative quality there be, it cannot but result from the nature, the relationships and the action, of the contributing plastic values.

In other words, transferred values of any category are not separable *parts* of the entity they belong to, but are *aspects* of it and, consequently, inextricable from it, as they are, in the same fashion, aspects and not parts of each other.

† In reality, a flower-patterned drapery cloth which Matisse frequently used as a part of his subject and made to appear in his paintings as, in turn, a tablecloth, a couch cover or a background or wall setting.

these areas that makes for a oneness among them, a completing unity.

To objectify the above observation, we shall pinpoint, first, wherein the areas of the Matisse contrast. Of the three, the lowest, the cloth area, is a horizontal oblong, divided simply into a few large vertical units alternately of dark and of light, that tilts slightly into and sets off space in front of itself as it moves upward and recedes from left to right. The second area, the tabletop with fruit, pots and urn, is a complex, multicolored and animated area, with a variety of small, compactly arranged, angularly curved units, and their overall grouping undulates angularly across the area, from its upper left to its lower right. The small active units are disposed upon a supporting blue plane, the tabletop itself, and, together with it, set off space above themselves. The third area, the background, acts as a setting for the other two areas and illustratively says "open and folded screen."* As an area, it is, in general, two-dimensional, and space is set off in front of it. The total background area is itself divided, not unlike the entire picture format, into three subsidiary areas, but, while in the picture as a whole they are horizontal, in the background these divisions are vertical. They vary in hue from a pastel tonality to a dark, multicolored one, and, in their relationships to each other, form a relatively quiet background plane that closes up the recession.

Such "artificial" dissecting as we have engaged in reveals, as no other method does, what there is of objectively verifiable material in a painting and how the units are related. For example, from what we have already seen, we are able to perceive that there is contrast, drama, in the very framework of the organization of this Matisse. We see, therefore, that the three main areas together do what

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*Incidentally, the right-hand area of this background was originally misidentified (Barnes and de Mazia, *The Art of Henri-Matisse*, The Barnes Foundation Press, Merion, Pa., 1933, p. 374) as a drapery, until, on a visit to the artist's studio, the screen that had served as a part of the subject in "Blue Still Life" was seen and the right-hand area of the background in the painting recognized as having been a folded section of it.

none alone can—a circumstance in a way comparable to the functional relationships among the cogs or levers of a working piece of machinery or of the simple mechanism of a lock. As with the piece of machinery or the lock, so with this painting: each part is much what it is because of what it does in conjunction with the other parts. And all together—as opposed to their being separate pieces of iron in a box or the individual colors on Matisse's palette (Frontispiece)—are and do what they are and do because they have been selected and organized for the sake of and according to a picture purpose, a theme. They function as a team.

With all their features of contrast, there are among the three main areas which make up this Matisse a number of characteristics and activities in common. These three areas are and function, as we said, as members of a team, each one intent on achieving a common and specific overall goal. For one thing, their respective constituents are of a similar kind of color and tone and the contrast between them of a similar degree—an example of transferred values within the painting: in each of the three main areas, that is, the contrasts are bold and made up of vividly illuminated, glowing units of saturated color, dense of texture, distinctly shaped and in direct juxtaposition to each other. This makes for an outstandingly vibrant color drama, with the motif of bold contrasts all-pervasive, operative everywhere, in the large units and the small. And each unit bangs with all it has—with all it has of color, tone, shape—against every one of its neighbors' color, tone and shape. Nor do its neighbors take it lying down, but bang back in a similar fashion.

One result of all this is that the identity of each unit in "Blue Still Life" is set off by the reciprocal actions among its constituents, and the composite dramatic relationships bang at us in a continuous machine-gun rat-tat-tatting of color shapes. These color shapes are not like those we have known to belong either to the subject or to the work of other artists, nor are they related according to any conventional rule of "harmony." Such unconventional relationships as occur in this Matisse might correspond to what in

music, for lack of a better term, is called dissonance—an appellation originally used as a disparagement of the "twelve-tone" musical compositions of Schönberg and Hindemith, but which now describes a particular musical effect due to departures from the traditional. In music, as in the Matisse, the effects of such distortions keep the listener, the observer, keyed up to a high pitch of dramatic excitation, constantly on the *qui vive*, expecting the unexpected and never encountering a dull moment or area.

We have still to see, further than we have thus far seen, how the contrasts in "Blue Still Life" come together in a unified entity and what human values the painting embodies. One of the ways, for instance, in which the three main areas function together and achieve what none alone could is through the presence of a general flood of light that absorbs the contrasts within itself, without, however, destroying them—an example, again, of transferred values within the picture. This all-pervasive light establishes a basic continuity of high-pitched intensity, and forceful drama is created within it by the punctuating beats of relatively large units of color functioning either as light or as dark. The main sources for this dual effect which Matisse transferred into his picture are the Impressionists (*e.g.,* Plate 57), for the flooding light, and the Venetians (*e.g.,* Plate 32), for the alternating large regions of dark and of light.

Another connecting element in the composite identity of this painting is the all-encompassing sweeps of dark and of light from the upper left to the lower right of the canvas and from the upper right to the lower left. Then, too, is there the feature of a single unit being made to function as part of two distinct constituents of the composition, namely, the distorted perspective of the cloth at the left side of the table as it moves on to the table's top, a distortion which causes the side of the cloth to belong to both the front and the side of the table. And, from a broader compositional standpoint, the arrangement of the three main horizontal areas is such that the lower and the middle one are wedged in by the background area in dovetail fashion, with reciprocal inter-penetration of the

large urn upward into the screen area and of the sides of the screen downward into the lower area, with the entire unit of the table—top, side and front—being revealed, so to speak, as it is also framed compactly in, by the specific interlocking relationship of the container (the screen area at the top and at the sides) to its contents (the tabletop, objects and cloth).*

All of this is not as yet enough for an organic unity, for it may still be and act as does a fence around fighting dogs, which helps us to cope with, but not to solve, the problem. A more organic relationship in the Matisse is to be found, for instance, in the space formation of the three main areas—*i.e.* in that the lower area leads to the next one and the next, as the riser of a step formation does with reference to the tread and the next riser. There is, in fact, a large, well-marked step formation from lower right to upper left that intersects and counterbalances a somewhat less well-defined step from lower left to upper right. And their joint action involves the whole in an all-encompassing upward, backward, upward movement of three large color planes, with drama created by the contrasting, although balancing, diagonals already noted and by the emphasis given to the platform character of the tabletop—a stage, so to speak, for the actors to thump upon—and to the multicolorfulness of its multifarious components.

"Blue Still Life" has still another large-scale tie-up set of relationships, namely, as often appears in Cézanne (*e.g.*, Plate 70), what we call the sandwich formation†—*i.e.*, three parallel bands, with the more complex or richer center one inserted between, and held in by, the other two, either on a single plane or in depth. And, also as in many a

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*For a diagrammatic illustration of this arrangement, see Plate 77.

†The sandwich formation often occurs in a platform and in a step situation, but not necessarily. In Cézanne's "Bathers at Rest" (Plate 67), for example, there is a platform, but not the sandwich nor the step. Renoir's "Anemones" (Plate 25), Soutine's "Flowerpiece" (Plate 23) and van Gogh's "Flowerpiece" (Plate 22) all have a platform, but, again, no sandwich. And in Rousseau's "Flowerpiece" (Plate 24) there is a step formation and yet no sandwich established by it.

Cézanne, here in the Matisse, the top of the front of the sandwich (viewed in depth) has been removed and reveals, focusses the attention on, the tempting filling. One effect of the sandwich formation is compactness, and this in the Matisse qualifies the activity of the center area: there is so much color activity in such a shallow, contained "slice" of space.

A further compositional tie among the three main, contrasting units of "Blue Still Life" is a series of linear sequences that sew, thread, as a line can as it leads the eye on to and through, the contrasting areas—a Matisse version of Cézanne's skewers (*e.g.,* Plate 69), in which version the skewers diverge somewhat from the straight rectilinear direction.

We have more than intimated that part of our problem will be to find out how the drama of "Blue Still Life" comes to equilibrium, is unified, and some of us may already have decided that that will be an easy matter: we need only look for repetitions here and there of colors and of shapes. Such an undertaking would, indeed, be easy and simple—much too simple to fit the case of a man who, first, had a very rich background of experience and, also, was as individual in the manner in which he said his say as in what he said. Matisse, like any other artist, was far from resorting to an easy way out by way of shopworn devices. It is, in fact, precisely because he broke boldly away from conventional ideas that he was called a Fauve: he refused to be tied down by the artificial discipline of the studios; he refused to be buried alive by doing as done or decreed or to be led to his own funeral by the leash of academicism, although he started his studies in Gustave Moreau's studio, where, despite Moreau's creative departures in his own work, young painters were still trained in the academicism of the day. Rouault, incidentally, was there with Matisse, and they both soon discovered that the beaten path is for beaten men and—despite the ensuing uproar—found their way out and from then on lived their own lives as creative artists.

The title of the painting, "*Nature Morte Bleue*" ("Blue Still

Life"), is Matisse's own* and rather interesting to consider. As a title, it is uncomplicated: it appears to be simply a descriptive means of identification and does not compete with the picture itself for our attention. Nor does it supply or inform of things that the picture fails to give, as when a title is resorted to in order to explain the work, most often its subject.†

"Blue Still Life," as a title, does not encroach on the painting itself, does not provide any missing clues. Rather, it seems to describe what anyone can see the picture represents—objects of still life in which blue seems to dominate and to serve as a kind of setting for the splash of variegated colors. And yet, the picture, despite what Matisse called it, is the opposite of what its title suggests, and, in that very fact, drama occurs—*i.e.,* drama between what we recognize that the situation was and is possibly described by the title to have been and what it became and is as a painting.

The picture, "Blue Still Life," is, in actuality, not just blue, and it is not still; particularly, it is not *morte*, *i.e.,* dead ("still life" in French is "*nature morte,*" literally, "dead nature"). Yes, it is blue here and there, but as many other colors that are as active as blue are present and as loudly clamor for attention: "Look, here, how yellow I am," says one area, and "See me here, how red," says another. And still? Inanimate? Nowhere, not for a moment or a spot of canvas is this so. Nothing is still. There are large-scale sweeps and skewers and cascading, drooping garlands, stepping up and criss-crossing and interpenetrating components of what was a still life that now *bump* each other,

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*Matisse also, on occasion, called the painting "*Nature Morte au Camaïeu Bleu*" ("Still Life in Tones of Blue").

†As is the case, for instance, of Le Lorraine Albright's "That which I should have done I did not do" and, in general, of Dali's titles, such as "One Second Before the Awakening from a Dream Provoked by the Flight of a Bee Around a Pomegranate" and "My wife, nude, contemplating her own flesh becoming stairs, three vertebrae of a column, sky, and architecture." When Timmy said to Hanky, while looking together at a comic book, that "the writing's for people who can't read the pictures," Timmy made an important statement.

jump, bounce, dance; the yellow patch within one of the handles of the large urn *peeps* through; a multifarious "garland" *tumbles* down from the upper left of the canvas, across the tabletop and down to the lower right of the cloth; bright colors *break out* in little bits through the dark area of the folded screen at the right; the twigs emerging from the small pot right of center of the display, claw-like, tend to *twitter* as they seem to *unfold*, *stretch* and *reach out*; the large shadow cast upon the left-hand and center areas of the screen *sweeps* up and across; the pieces of fruit on the tabletop *push* and *jostle* each other like a crowd of women viewed from the back at a bargain counter; the floral motifs at the upper left section of the screen *dangle* in space like two *dancing*, gaily-costumed marionettes; the large dark unit at the left on the front of the cloth *soars* like an eagle; the basket pattern on the front of the cloth at the right *pulls* forward in space; a branch from this "basket" *reaches out* at the left, not unlike a lobster claw; and all seem to *shout* as they thus move. From this activity come effects that we may have experienced in such things as a county fair, with its vivid, jangling vitality, or a market scene in Europe or in foreign sections of our own cities, with their noisy colorfulness—effects here transferred into what was a still life. And it is easy to picture Matisse coming home from the market to his studio and seeing an ordinary group of ordinary things in the light of a riot of colors and noises and dramatic activities experienced just before or at some time or many times, the residue, the "hushed reverberations," of which past experiences is brought to bear now on his experience of the still life.

Compositional integration in Matisse, as in any great artist, is not, as we have already suggested, a matter of conventional repetition of color and shape. It is in the way that Matisse established unity that he reveals the ingenuity and resourcefulness that made him the colorist he was. The kind of unity that brings about quiet ease, uncomplicated, overt balance is not his case, as it is the case, in its simplest form, of the quiet drama and dignity of "Madonna in Prayer" (Plate 33), by a *Santero** of New

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*A maker of *Santos, i.e.,* small panels, usually representing figures of saints, painted by natives.

Mexico, in which the blue, red and black borders and the ivory of the background on one side are duplicated on the other. In van Gogh's "Flowerpiece" (Plate 22), on the other hand, the drama on each side between the dark flowers and the light yellow background would be relatively monotonous because of the repetition of a similar contrast of dark against light, except for the fact, here, that the dark flowers at the right are green, and those at the left are blue. Thus, although the effect recurs as dark against light, the nature of what creates that effect varies. In other words, the effect of the contrasts is repeated, and the color components and relationships that produce that effect are different: dark-against-light is transferred from one relationship to the other in a balance of equivalents—an instance, once more, of transferred values within a painting and, relevant to our study of "Blue Still Life," an illustration of a principle which in Matisse plays a major rôle.

There is, for instance, a basic similarity and an enriching variety among such recurring pastel areas as those of the foreground table cover, the large "white" urn and the area of the screen at the left; we recognize them by their sharing a pastel tonality, but we do not dismiss them simply as participants in a rhythm of pastel-colored units, because the change in their respective dominant color is sufficient to engage our interest: it is a bluish pastel, a greenish pastel, a pinkish pastel.*

The recurrences of the effects with their variations which we observed in the Matisse function in the painting

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*Some of Matisse's colors in these pastel areas acquire their richness by a quasi-layering or partial superimposition—rather than a crushing together, as in Soutine, of the pigments—as happens, for example, in the background to the flowered pattern on the left leaf of the screen. These layers are not as the glazes of the Venetians, although they partake of the idea of glazes, now, however, merged with the overlapping brush strokes of the Impressionists, and yield color chords in depth of a new sort and in a new way. It is, then, the Venetian principle, not the matter, that is used to inject subtlety into bold color contrasts that anyone can see and produce, but without the feeling for color relationships that Matisse had—a deficiency exemplified by many poster makers and contemporary painters, who may blow their own trumpet blare of color, but, next to Matisse's "Blue Still Life," for instance, are without the finesse of color relationships that makes of Matisse the extraordinary colorist he was and which finesse usually escapes the would-be emulator.

much as rhyme does in poetry as against the monotonous repetition in mere jingle: the recurrence serves to contain and to give coherence and oneness to the varied contents of meaning, thereby becoming an aspect of, and integral with, the expression, rather than serving more or less as the main point of the statement and, in effect, dominating and diminishing whatever is being said within it. Accordingly, our attention is held by the Matisse, in opposition to its being soon exhausted by the *Santo* "Madonna in Prayer," less so by van Gogh's "Flowerpiece" and very soon by the emulators, the mere followers, of Matisse, who fail to see that distinctive aesthetic aspect of Matisse's repetitions, which is due precisely to the varying makeup of the repeated effects.*

Another illustration in "Blue Still Life" of the characteristics just discussed, which are none other than those of aesthetic rhythm, is Matisse's repetitive, but not in the least monotonous, use of blue and of other colors that appear to be or that are absorbed, so to speak, by the blue. The large "blue" shadow, for example, cast on the area of the screen from above the "white" urn down to the lower left of the canvas, has green in it at the upper part, and, as our eye moves downward, the "blue" is, in turn, brown (where it crosses the broad vertical band) and of lavender-pink strokes partly superimposed on strokes of light green (in the area between the band and the lower part of the screen). And, of the blues themselves—there are hardly any two alike—at the right, in the area of the folded screen, it is blue against purple, a conjunction which does,

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*Note, also, what Matisse does in "Blue Still Life" when, applying the same principle of repeating an effect and varying each time the nature of what produces that effect, he makes the twig which curves downward to the left as it comes from the small pot right of center carry through as a continuous linear feature curving to the left and downward, at the same time that it goes through a series of changes in color and in color relationships with the surrounding area—starting out near the rim of the pot as yellow contrasted against a blue, becoming green against yellow, then a bright orangy red set off by blackish brown. This idea was later adapted by Kandinsky (*e.g.,* Plate 14), Miró (*e.g.,* Plate 17) and others and made practically a compositional theme in many a picture by post-Matisse painters, as illustrated, for instance, in Levedag's "Still Life," shown on Plate 13.

in essence, what the pink and green units on the screen at the left do—again, a balance of equivalents, which means transferred values within the composition, here of an expressive decorative sort and of a sort that intensifies, rather than dulls, the drama. The blues in the front plane of the cloth vary in hue from a blackish blue and an ultramarine to a delicate, pale sky blue, lavender and even green and function, in the rhythm of their large units, as bold notes of dark and of light. The yellows, likewise, dispersed throughout the canvas, vary within their own punctuating rhythm from a dark brassy brown to a pale tan to a bright chrome to a saturated ochre.

And then there are the striking, eloquent, deep darks, some of which, particularly those in the patterning units on the tablecloth, partake of the lustre and saturation of blue-black ink, while the dark outlines of the fruit suggest the leading of stained glass and run the gamut of colors from brown to green to black, as they help to draw, model, create depth and pattern and to intensify the dramatic color vivacity of the units they define. Were we to eliminate these darks, the units would lose the bouncing aliveness their present outlines endow them with, and the colors would lose much of their vibrancy.*

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*A pertinent aside: looking at Matisse's career as an artist, from his early Fauve work to the latest "cut-outs," we are confronted with evidence that all along Matisse's outlook on the world, as reflected in the interest shown in the paintings themselves—yes, with ups and downs, but on a certain level of aesthetic achievement—remained pretty constant: early and late work and everything in between show that not only was it the expressive decorativeness of the things around him that engrossed him, but also that the line of his development in a sense parallels what our analytical study of "Blue Still Life" disclosed—namely, a repetition of effects with variety in what is responsible for those effects. In other words, a piece by Matisse, whatever be the period of its creation, is fundamentally one more of those characteristically Matisse highly decorative, yet expressive and illustrative, organizations relying on patterns, generally of high-key, luminous color, exotic in its nature and relationships, with one more set of variations in all the aspects of the composition, variations that modify the general Matisse effect of the picture, but do not necessarily bring it either above or below the aesthetic merit of its antecedents.

What we mean to indicate here is that what we pointed out as being a distinctive feature of "Blue Still Life" is also a distinctive feature of Matisse's career. Matisse was able continuously to renew himself in picture after picture. Compare, for example, his "Two Girls in Interior" shown on Plate 18 and the

Interestingly, the above-described, cause-and-effect relationships—dissimilar set of components, similar end result—are reversed with regard to the pink in the patterning on the left section of the screen and the very same pink that appears in the lighted band of the folded screen at the right. What is repeated here is the matter—the pink of the dabs. The context, however, is so different in each case—on the one hand it is pink acting as dark against its lighted surroundings and, on the other, pink acting as light against the darks all around it—that the resulting effect this time, too, adds to the rich aliveness of the total canvas rather than blunting it, as mere repetition would.

The distinctive character of Matisse's color relationships escapes, in general, many a critic and also many a student of Matisse's work, who tend to see things in isolation and, consequently, fail to perceive the meaning of the specific, all-important relationships brought about by the artist. As a result, they are content to see and to say that, for example, a unit in Matisse, such as the piece of fruit in "Blue Still Life" at the right-hand corner of the table, recognizable as having been a lemon, is but a boldly-shaped

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canvas reproduced on Plate 19: both done in 1947, they started from a same subject—the girls, the table in front of them with a still-life arrangement on it and the landscape seen through the open window in the background. Neither picture is richer in aesthetic contents or more subtle in expressiveness or more successfully executed technically than the other or than "Blue Still Life," which, to recall, harks back to 1907. But each one is a novel, individual variation on basic ideas, typical of Matisse, of dramatically exotic color decorativeness, with stark light-dark drama coming to the fore in the painting shown on Plate 18 and gentle color-and-line arabesques and close tonal contrasts serving as the keynote in the one on Plate 19.

This renewal on the part of Matisse occurred despite the fact that—in contrast to Renoir, for instance, who deepened and refined his perceptions, and to Cézanne, who became more and more skillful technically—he remained, both in matter of depth and refinement of vision and in matter of technical ability, at a more or less constant level of degree and kind of quality.

Like the two paintings above described, all of Matisse's paintings say "Matisse!"—indeed, shout it out loud and clear—but each is another, a different, painting, a different, yet incontestably Matisse, painting: effect repeated, what creates it varied.

Of course, such repetition of effects is the case of any artist. It is, however, remarkable in Matisse, because the variety of their presentation, restricted though it be to a somewhat narrow area of interest, seems never to have been exhausted.

oval of bright yellow. And that statement is, indeed, far from fitting the situation as it is and as it may be objectively verified.

Let it be said at the outset that, isolated from its context, the identity of that lemon, as we shall see, is immediately deprived of what it owes to the fact that it plays a specific rôle in the total picture machinery, of which it is a functioning cog, the last colorful word, as it were, of a colorful sentence.

Nevertheless, there is something to be gained from isolating a given unit, so long, that is, as we do not stop with that. If we separate from its context that yellow oval at the right-hand corner of the table in "Blue Still Life" that says either "lemon" or some other fruit (Plate 72), we can see that it had been so selected and its paint so applied that, in itself, it has and says, expresses, such qualities as depth, solidity, density, glow*—all qualities distinctive of Venetian painting, here transferred into a color that might never have been used by the Venetian artists. It also conveys a sense of firm robustness transferred from Cézanne (*e.g.,* Plate 76), achieved in the Matisse through, in particular, the quality of the pigment, the density of its texture.

The "yellow oval," having much not taken from the Venetians, Cézanne and the lemon as it was, gains, in exchange, what Matisse brought into it that was *his—that* ruggedness of surface and substance, *that* color intensity, *that* color effulgence and clang, *that* luminous glow, *that* boldness of the definition of shape, *that* simplicity of modelling.

Once the relationships are broken with its context by isolating the "yellow oval" as we have done in Plate 72, the unit loses, as we remarked, much of what Matisse gave it; yet it is still a Matisse unit, with qualities (intensity, saturated colorfulness, glowing luminosity) transferred from such things as an egg yolk, the harvest moon, incandescent coal. With the absence of its context, however, its yellow is

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**Cf.* the unit that says yellow fruit in van Gogh's "Flowerpiece" (Plate 22), and how drab the latter seems!

not so peppily alive and lacks the color power Matisse endowed it with by placing it just where he placed it in the context that yielded the desired effects, nor is it so effulgent or so spatial in the sense of coming forward in a three-dimensional setting. Return the unit to the picture situation (Fold-out Plate 78) and it projects from the surrounding area and sets in it like a glowing, hot sun "at night"—yet one more transferred value that comes in to enrich what says yellow fruit.

Still another meaning that Matisse's lemon takes on by virtue of its relationships to the context is its functioning as a volume in poised balance: it is in *this* position on the way to *that* one, as a see-saw might be, or one of those dolls that bounce back on their own when made to lie down or a toe dancer or a skater, a Calder mobile, players in mid-air in a basketball game, as well as the figures in Luigi Settanni's "Ballet" (Plate 38), the dancer in the foreground in Degas' "Three Ballet Girls" (Plate 21) and the figure in Courbet's "Woman with Doves" (Plate 20).

Even just as color, Matisse's lemon depends for what it is on the relationships that exist between it and its immediate color setting, as we easily see if we surround it with, say, cardboard cut-outs of different colors or tones (*e.g.,* Plates 72, 74 and 75). The same is true of its very shape, which is acted upon and reacts with the configurations of the rest of the units, the contrasting angles and the other ovals that are then insisted upon. And thus does the lemon become incorporated, along with the vari-colored and vari-sized fruit, pots, urn, etc., into a compositional staccato rhythm of similarly, yet differently, active units and eloquently participates in the tumbling down movement from the upper left of the canvas to the lower right corner of the table, as would the last "arabesque" of a dancer ending the "*jetés*" and "*pirouettes.*" Not, however, a fluid dance in the Matisse, the activity is that of the quick, lively tempo of a folk dance, a county-fair dance in costume, with short turns and thumpings and, practically throughout, constant changes of direction. In fact, in "Blue Still Life," there are no strictly vertical or horizontal lines. Instead, the lines zigzag or simply change direction or fan out. And, at the

same time that the linear directions make for activity, so do the color units jump around, romp about and dance all over the canvas: they follow each other not casually, but in a rapid arpeggio, so that the sensuous impact is of color *after* color, rather than of a flowing or a blending of chords—all of which imparts to the pervasive activity of line and color a highly decorative vibrant vividness and bizarreness.

But bizarreness, as we noted and know, is a relative thing, dependent on the time and the place when and where an object or situation occurs. As we know, too, Matisse's "Blue Still Life" is less bizarre now than it was in 1907. But bizarreness depends also on the nature itself of what of a subject is presented and on the way it is depicted—here, ordinary objects given an unordinary character—and to the milieu—for us, a Western world not acclimatized by its surroundings to color associated with the distant Orient, hence, colors *we* find exotic and bizarre.

With all the stress on the decorative in this Matisse, there is also an expressiveness that is of the boldness, the richness, the drama, the sense of surprise, the character of the movement, as the banging, the pulsating, the choppy, dancing aliveness of the units—all of which is further qualified by an inner glow that enters into and imparts a luster to even the darkest areas.*

On the whole, then, all the units in the Matisse pull together; even the whites function as color against color, rather than as tones. Light in relation to dark helps to render three-dimensionality, and, no less than is line, both

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*A "super-criticism" might justly be directed towards the shadow on the yellow fruit immediately to the right of and slightly overlapping the broad vertical band left of center on the open screen: the V-shaped shadow, which functions effectively as a "hyphen" between the down-and-up sweep of the large shadow on the open screen and the "soaring" unit at the left front of the tablecloth, does so a bit at the expense of its own integration with the lighted part of the fruit.

A "super-criticism" is a noting of a flaw in technique, composition, color, etc., that is yet of a minor significance in terms of the picture meaning, *i.e.*, minor in that the flaw—a slip of the brush, as it were, not unlike a slip of the tongue or of the mind or of the chisel—does not interfere with or seriously detract from the overall expression.

light and dark are organic parts of and active participants in the total color theme: wherever light and dark occur and function as such, they are in essence, colors and patterning shapes.

The linear theme throughout is as diversified in its subsidiary rhythms as is the color organization. Linear motifs, such as the angular festoon-curve, the band, the stripe, the claw-like configuration, the dramatically abrupt curving angle, and so on, recur again and again, but not the color, tone and size that create these effects. Once more, that is, similar characteristics carry us through the composition by way of transferred values within the picture, and the novel color, tone, size and direction, not to mention context and relationships to it, as well as individually qualifying transferred values (*e.g.,* stained-glass leading, blue-black ink), each time renew our interest and keep it alert.

As with the use of color, light and line, distortions in the use of space—relationships in depth—are likewise purposive, made to depart from the literal in such manner and to be what they are in order to fulfill, in unison with the other members of the team—color, light, line—the requirements of Matisse's intent in his painting of "Blue Still Life." The perspective of the table, for instance, distorted in the manner it is distorted, contributes a basic element of jerky activity in space as the three areas shown relate to each other: each one seems to push each of the other two out of its respective natural relationships; the tabletop, tilted forward as it is, makes of its blue-areaness more of a platform kind of setting for the objects upon it than it could be were it to take its place in the recession according to undistorted visual perspective. The floral pattern on the leaf of the screen at the left is detached from its two-dimensional setting. Thus, with the previously mentioned transferred values of two gaily-costumed marionettes dangling and dancing in space, it fittingly joins the rhythms of color volumes in shallow space that constitute the common denominator of the picture's components. These light-in-weight color volumes at the upper left initiate the tumbling down and crescendo abundance of

the "cornucopia" spread of color shapes and volumes overflowing on the tabletop and down to the "basket" at the lower right.

In the course of our analysis of Matisse's picture "Blue Still Life," we readily acknowledge the subject facts that are depicted, but, thanks to Matisse's sensitive and imaginative insight, we can now perceive them in the light of effects and qualities we have had opportunity to see and to sense elsewhere—*i.e.,* in the light of the multitudinous expressive transferred values they embody by virtue of the manner of their presentation.

We have already alluded, among other specific expressive transferred values, to the sprightly gaiety of the pair of dancing, dangling marionettes in the floral decoration on the screen at the left, which area we might add, is made up, in part, of confetti-like dabs and decorative motifs accented by black-black, squarish patches that recall in their color and sharp clear-cutness the deep black and the crisp outline of sliced truffles. And we have referred, earlier, too, to the lift of a soaring eagle that characterizes the large motif on the front of the cloth at the left—a unit that suggests also the poised equilibrium of a trained seal as we perceive the way in which the plate above the "eagle" is balanced on the "eagle's head" and that thus functions as a counterpart to the balance of the lemon on the corner of the table.

Going further and speaking more generally, we can observe the overall effect of the canvas, which may remind us of the glowing translucency of Gothic stained glass (*e.g.,* Plate 28), the vivacity and straightforwardness of folk art, as it may also re-awaken in us the enchantment of tropical scenery. Textures and surfaces combine the ruggedness of unglazed ceramic ware, the gloss of majolica and, in the area of the folded screen, the warm mellowness of old velvet or of Oriental weavings, while the front part of the tablecloth suggests at one and the same time the soft lusciousness of ancient Chinese rugs and the glistening of wet marble.

The composite identity of the painting partakes also of qualities we associate with such things as the sonorous,

metallic clang of cymbals, the lustrous sparkling of semi-precious stones; the brisk aliveness of a full-dress cavalcade, with flourish of trumpets and thumping of hoofs; the healthy stimulation of the pros and cons in arguments among friends; the dazzling brilliance of a sun-drenched landscape; the angular rhythm of a mazurka; the zest and piquancy of exotic food; the daring of color juxtaposition in some Oriental fabrics; the abrupt drama of the high-low-high voice changes in yodeling chants; the eye-titillating quality of colorful early American patchwork and appliqué quilts (*e.g.,* Plate 66); the shimmering of color and light in nuggets of gold or copper ore; the joyful resonance of a carillon; the tumbling or cascading down and across of a many-colored garland; the plenitude of a lavish banquet; the multifarious animation and kaleidoscopic colorfulness of a three-ring circus, with the robust vitality of Russian dancers in costume; the picturesqueness of a *diseur de bons mots*; the saturated illumination of footlights.

Likewise are we led to recall and to transfer in our perception of "Blue Still Life"—according to our individual past experiences—such other qualifying features as the harmony of "dissonances" in some of Stravinsky's music; the startling colorfulness of exotic birds; the bold simplicity of the pattern to be found in Persian and Moroccan tiles; the allure of variegated gems displayed on a blue satin-covered tray; the ebullience of revelry; the jostling and the loud vibrancy of fiestas, parades, fanfares, Oriental bazaars, Algerian souks; the compactly rich abundance of an overflowing cornucopia; and, perhaps summing it all up, an extravaganza of color, sound and movement, a spectacular bonanza of eye-entertaining sights permeated through and through with the festive exuberance of, say, the fourth, or, for Matisse, the fourteenth, of July!—all of which highly sensuous aspects, and more, completely assimilated and integrated in the Matisse canvas, interact, blend with and reinforce each other in their respective expressive decorativeness to yield an all-encompassing identity which is new, nay,

unique, and creative as it embodies the thoroughly distinctive individuality of none other than Matisse himself.*

And from the traditions of painting there are, likewise, transferred values galore. Limiting the list to a few, we shall note the high-key tonality of the color scheme and the allover luminosity stemming from the Impressionists, with, in the Matisse, an intensity to the individual color components—which components are enlarged from the dabs of the Impressionists†—not found in Impressionism. Further, these color components are combined with the dramatic beats and the large units of dark set against large units of light that occur in pre-Impressionist painting, notably in the Venetian tradition (*e.g.*, Plate 32), the latter being also the source for the internal, structural, glow of the color that Matisse imbues his units with. Exoticism of the colors and the color relationships of Japanese woodcut prints of the nineteenth century (*e.g.*, Plate 27) and their decorativeness are brought into the Matisse and serve to qualify, without destroying, the feeling of hominess which Matisse retains in the presentation of his subject, despite all of its distortions—a hominess we might attach to the work of the seventeenth-century Dutch painters (*e.g.*, Plate 45) and to Chardin (*e.g.*, Plate 34) and which is generally absent from, for instance, still lives painted by Picasso (*e.g.*, Plate 73). The compositional sweep across the canvas from upper left to lower right or from upper right to lower left has, in its down-

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* Alfred Barr, Jr., in *Matisse—His Art and His Public* (the Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1951, p. 533), says: "Barnes and de Mazia . . . analyze this complex canvas ["Blue Still Life"] with such elaborate detail, patience and enthusiasm that the reader had best turn to their book [*The Art of Henri-Matisse*, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York–London, 1933], especially to the rhapsody on page 378, where words do not fail them". What Barr should have said is that imagination, versatility, intelligence, ingenuity, creative ability and aesthetic sensitivity did not fail Matisse.

† "*Un centimètre carré de bleu* [a square centimeter of blue]," Matisse has been quoted as having said, "*est moins bleu qu'un mètre carré* [is less blue than a square meter of it]." Hence, incidentally, if for no other reason, are color reproductions of paintings so very misleading.

In a similar vein, Gauguin earlier declared that he would carry the Impressionists' colorful luminosity further by enlarging their color dabs to areas and thereby obtain a still greater colorfulness and luminosity—a statement at times also attributed to Matisse.

up-down flow, an affinity to the rhythm in, again, Japanese wood-cut prints frequently effected by the placement and attitude of a figure (*e.g.*, Plate 27). The diagonal sweeps in the Matisse, however, and their drama partake of the forcefulness of Tintoretto's (*e.g.*, Plate 31), and the staccato angularity of their linear rhythms belongs to El Greco (*e.g.*, Plate 35), as do also the vividness of the individual light-dark contrasts and the flash-like drama of the illumination throughout the painting. The influence of Gauguin* and van Gogh came in part from what these artists had already transferred from Oriental art into the modern French tradition (*cf.*, *e.g.*, Plates 3 and 64) and is likewise apparent in the Matisse in the stressing of patterns made by color contour bands and by juxtaposed color shapes. A contribution by Pissarro (*e.g.*, Plate 56) is to be seen in the ruggedness of the body of the paint. Matisse's flattening of volumes in "Blue Still Life," his simplifications in the drawing and the expressiveness of confident, descriptive individual brush strokes provide ample evidence that Manet (*e.g.*, Plate 68), too, supplied a source for Matisse's transferred values, as does also the "black-and-white" effect of the snappy color contrasts common to both men's work and the directness, the straightforwardness of the expression. Cézanne is the origin of the staccato of the step formation (*e.g.*, Plate 76), the compactness of the sandwich organization (*e.g.*, Plate 70), the compositional directness of the skewers (*e.g.*, Plate 69), the color drama of the *cloisonné* outline (*e.g.*, Plate 71)—all of which we have

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*An amusing incident concerning Gauguin's influence on Matisse: with Dr. Barnes at a large retrospective exhibition of Matisse's work held in Paris in 1931, we were tracing the influence of Gauguin on a particular painting and on Matisse's painting in general. Matisse himself was with us and, although not conversant with the English language, seemed to enjoy following us from painting to painting. At one point, upon hearing us mention Gauguin, he became anxious to know just what it was that we were saying. We translated the remark we had made, and, "*Non, non, non, ce n'était pas comme ça, mais plutôt le contraire!*" ("No, no, no, it was not like that, but, rather, the other way around!") Matisse exclaimed, obviously disturbed by our observation, but forgetting for the moment that Gauguin had died in 1903, a few years before Matisse's painting had crystallized into its distinctive form. Matisse's pride as an artist had been pricked: he was human, after all.

mentioned in our analysis of "Blue Still Life" and to which we add the basic sense of sturdiness, even monumentality, due in great measure to Cézanne's compositional framework (*e.g.,* Plate 76), upon which Matisse erected his own distinctive harmony of dramatic, intense and highly decorative color contrasts.

Yet, with all that, and even so, Matisse's reds, blues, etc., his dramatic contrasts, his dark, colorful outline, and so on *are not* to be found in the Venetians, or in Gauguin or van Gogh or Pissarro or Manet or Cézanne, but, rather, *have* within their own Matisse individuality qualities we can perceive for having experienced them in these other artists' work. That is, with all the acknowledged evidence of features derived, transferred, by Matisse from these and still other artists' contributions, *"Eppur, si muove!"* ("Nevertheless, it [the earth] moves!")—Matisse remains Matisse, and no other descriptive term or terms could more fittingly define the present canvas than "Matisse's very own" or than "a still-life arrangement of fruit set against a screen used as the subject of a painting in 1907 by the artist Matisse."

* * * * *

For a succinct summing up of the rapport between plastic, illustrative, expressive and decorative transferred values—what respectively they do and, in particular, what they accomplish in terms of the artist's expression—we may consider just the unit that says "lemon" at the right corner of the table in Matisse's "Blue Still Life."

In his use of a lemon as part of the subject for this painting, Matisse, first of all, selected certain attributes both from the visual aspect of things in the world in general (plastic attributes) and from a lemon in particular (illustrative attributes). The resulting picture unit, accordingly, was provided with a relatively bright yellow color, a more or less oval shape, a sense of three-dimensionality, and so forth. Each of these is a plastic characteristic also made illustrative, given, as it were, "a habitation and a name," by the relationships established among them,

which duplicate, after a fashion, their relationships in an actual lemon.

Had this been all that Matisse did with the unit, it would merely be that, an illustration, a symbol, of a lemon, without meaning beyond its factual identity—a meaning of minimal significance to us because, once recognition has occurred, the possibilities for our responding have, by and large, been exhausted.

But Matisse did not choose simply to record the lemon, *i.e.,* to indicate his recognition of it by transferring its plastic/illustrative attributes to the canvas and leaving it at that. Instead, he went on to experience the lemon, to act back at it by doing something to it—specifically, to see and to say it in the light of his knowledge of qualities he had discovered in his experiences of other things and situations, as the quality, here in *his* lemon, of effulgent glow. And by so doing, by so investing his lemon with that expressive quality, he made of it a unit not just to be recognized and filed away as one more lemon, but to be experienced by the viewer, as it was by Matisse, for what it is here and now, *viz.,* a unit that embodies qualities that are of intrinsic interest to us because they lie at the heart of our intellectual, emotional and imaginative interactions with the world.

And, finally, in our experience of these qualities that belong now to this Matisse lemon, as our intelligence, our feelings, our imagination are brought into play, we, as was Matisse, are awakened to experiences from other times of other things—such as, with the glowing, effulgent lemon, the glow, for instance, of the harvest moon—and expressive transferred values are born.

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Reviewing the concept of transferred values as we have examined it in this series of essays in the light of what the total process of perception consists of, we should observe that sense registration would have no meaning to us and recognition would be sterile were it not for the function of

transferred values—vitally active as they are at every stage of perception, once sense registration has occurred.

If we consult the diagram (reproduced here in black and white on Plate 52) we used (in color) in our earlier essay "Method"* to illustrate as simply as we could the process of perception, we should easily spot the birthplace of transferred values—within the "keg," of course, *i.e.,* within our background knowledge—and we can follow their tracks back to the impact of the originally registered outside stimulus, the objective status of which they invest with their own specific significance: the red and the blue stimuli in the color diagram, for example, may, by way of transferred values, be now, mean now, a fiery red and a watery blue.

What, in fact, do our eyes register when we look at a canvas? Areas of color—that is all that is there, and this is so whether the work be an "abstract" or "non-objective" painting, a Renoir figure study, a Cézanne or a Matisse still life, a Soutine landscape, and so on. Among these areas, however, relationships inevitably occur, and things cannot but happen. Therefore, even with only two color areas, one area may seem to be behind the other, though we know the plane of the containing surface be flat, for the relationships between these areas give us cause to transfer from our knowledge of similar effects experienced in the actual world around us the effect of, for example, recession of one and projection of the other. In like manner, we—not so differently from the artist—transfer three-dimensionality of volume into a two-dimensional shape of color, if that shape is modelled with light and shadow or constructed of what we have termed structural color† or outlined with what we have referred to as a plastic line.‡ All of these effects are familiar in one form or another to all human adults.

**The Barnes Foundation Journal of the Art Department,* Spring, 1970, p. 12 facing.

† Violette de Mazia, "The Case of Glackens vs. Renoir," *The Barnes Foundation Journal of the Art Department,* Autumn, 1971, p. 7 ftn.

‡ Violette de Mazia, "Three Aspects of Art," *The Barnes Foundation Journal of the Art Department,* Autumn, 1975, p. 11 ftn.

When, after sense registration, which leads to the discovery of plastic qualities, we proceed further along the process of perception, we *recognize*—know anew what we have known previously—not only three-dimensionality, or "volume-ness," of color units that are in actuality two-dimensional, but, more specifically, three-dimensional "figure-ness" or "lemon-ness," etc., and we do so, once again, by transferring into the two-dimensional units characteristics we have known of such things as figure and lemon. For, the illustrative aspect of a painting, or recognition on the part of the viewer of what its subject was, as well as the incorporation on the part of the artist of a more or less clear clue to what his source in the world was, relies, as we noted, also on the principle of transferred values. In the case of the illustrative aspect, possibly to a lesser degree than in the case of the plastic values, the characteristics that permit of recognition of subject are transferred from a category of things—figure, lemon, table, sky, etc.—which a great number of people have experienced and know as such.

Unlike expressive transferred values, then, which stem from an individual's own background experience and thus endow both the plastic and the illustrative characteristics with precise significance—sun-drenched, incandescent yellow lemon—neither plastic nor illustrative transferred values are of a strictly personal nature. To reiterate and re-emphasize, transferred values applied to perception of plastic and illustrative characteristics are relatively limited and predictable, whereas transferred values that individualize a situation are limited only by the limits of the viewer's interest, sensitivity, background knowledge or past experiences, imagination and intelligence. This would have relevance, likewise, in a sense, to the artist as he is the viewer when responding to his subject.

In the final analysis, since transferred values and their ramifications owe their being perforce to the individuals we are, are we not, ourselves, willy-nilly, yes, helplessly and unavoidably, each one of us, in our own spheres of activities and in our own manner, in our own creative moments and achievements, an endless source, a mine, an

ever-expanding, never-to-be-exhausted lode of transferred values which are extracted, as well as added to, with each new experience?

In short, seeing or understanding the new (the present) in the light of the old (the past) tells the story of what transferred values are all about. And it goes without saying that transferred values, no less than other meanings and qualities perceived, pertinently or non-pertinently, occur and are of a particular nature according to each person's makeup, with imagination being, perhaps, the star performer in the entire transaction. Can we imagine living an intelligent life without it?

Since the artist's creative use of the traditions means a use of them as transferred values, it would seem logical to concern ourselves next with traditions as the vital tool they are in creative work. There is, however, also the point that the action of transferred values upon a given subject imparts to that subject a new and specific significance, transforms it, that is, into the very makeup of the picture. It remains, therefore, to be decided whether we shall deal in the next issue of VISTAS either with the topic of Subject and Subject Matter or with that of Tradition, since one or the other of these would be an appropriate sequel to our discussion of Transferred Values.

The Transferred Well

As and where it was . . .

As and where it is . . .

Granite Well, dated 1773,
as it was at Port-Manech, Brittany.

Dr. Albert C. Barnes
at the well where it was at Ker David, Port-Manech, Brittany.

Brittany Well transferred from Ker David, Port-Manech,
as and where it is at The Barnes Foundation, Merion, Pa.

A Letter from Holland

An Intimate Interaction with the Dutch Tradition

by Navâh Shmuelit*

Zandvoort-aan-zee†
Summer 1978

It is one of those rare, very welcome sunny days which bring every Dutch person out of doors and down the sand dunes to the seaside. A long band of warm gray tones—the sea—is overseen by the huge area of light blue sky that is unusually clear and even in hue.

The sky is always huge here, as the land is completely flat, and the horizon, therefore, low. This flatness is, in fact, monotonous and rather tiring visually; at least I have noticed that my eyes are feasting on the relieving sight of a raised bridge constructed to connect highways. Additional compensating variety is offered by the endlessly changing cloud formations. A line in a Danish song says, "The clouds are our mountains"; this could well be applied to Holland, too.

Indeed, my eyes have been feasting on all sorts of things ever since I studied at The Barnes Foundation—this as a direct result of what I have been shown through application of the Barnes method to the paintings of the various traditions of art. In this letter I shall concentrate on the meanings of the Dutch tradition,‡ for I have been closest

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†A beach resort at the North Sea in Holland

‡With the term "Dutch tradition" I refer to the all-encompassing ways of doing things in Holland, which include, of course, painting as well as living. I shall attempt to show how these affect each other and what the nature is of the characteristic qualities they have in common that give them their specific Dutch identity.

to it since taking the Barnes course. I shall show what the Dutch tradition of painting made me observe about the Dutch countryside and Dutch life, which in turn made me see Dutch painting, and, for that matter, many other things, with a richer background to draw from in the process of interacting with, of experiencing, it.

Sitting here at the seaside, I notice that the yellow-white paleness of the sand is dotted with inviting, cabin-like straw seats for two and a lot of armchairs pre-arranged in close-together pairs. I have seen this sort of scene on other beaches in Holland, and I catch myself thinking that only the Dutch people could have organized such an intimate-looking setup, with all its very appealing promise of coziness, even on the beach. The pairs of armchairs have a single piece of cloth over their heads and sides to protect the occupants from sun and wind, and the cobalt blue and deep orange of its color create, as far as the eye can see, a dramatic rhythm of contrast with the pale background of sand, sea and sky.

The beach itself is sandwiched between the sand dunes and the sea. As I turn my head in the direction of the dunes, I see ascending from behind them red roofs and chimneys which climb up in parallel lines. Puffing smoke slowly, these chimneys tell of the everyday activities going on inside the houses.

Episodes of everyday life, qualities of intimacy, drama of dark and light have all been shown to me by the early Dutch painters. I recognize old friends even here on the Dutch beach. I delight in the recognition and realize as well that, as a result of my knowledge of the Dutch tradition in art, I can see specific characteristics of the scene before me that I might otherwise have missed.

I yield to temptation and seat myself in one of the armchairs with paper, bottle of ink and my rediscovered dip-pen. Back to traditions it is!

Someone has just placed a little cup of freshly-made Dutch coffee on the little table at my side. This, by the way, is a direct translation from the Dutch language that loses in the English version: Dutch is all diminutives—*kopje koffie* (little cup of coffee), *tafeltje* (little table), *mannetje* (little

man), *vrouwtje* (little woman), and even I become Navâh-*tje* (little Navâh)—regardless of the actual size of the named item. This tendency to the diminutive in conversation affords an immediate feeling of intimacy, even between strangers, and is to some extent comparable in effect to the American use of first names among new acquaintances. Yes, another characteristic of the Dutch tradition—small-scale effects.

I observe, too, that the country itself is of a small scale. The Dutch are very aware of this fact and often make mention of it—an interesting interaction between people and their land and language.*

Back to my little nest on the beach, where I try to tap "hushed reverberations," to borrow a term from Santayana, in order to work out my impressions and thoughts and to organize them into some communicable order. And, so, surrounded by the Dutch beach scene, the sun on my face, sand around and under my bare feet, I listen to the wind and sea interacting with each other. I hope in moments of despair that somehow they will whisper to me the words I need in order to write this letter, as I wish to share with you, the reader, my Dutch experience from a particular point of view—that of the Dutch paintings I have learned to know-see.

Here I must make a slight detour to interact with "interaction." It is such a familiar member of the family of terms that are now part and parcel of my expression that I often wonder how, before attending The Barnes Foundation, I managed without it. It came up frequently during the course there, specifically with regard to understanding works of art; for it means not only that the paintings act upon the viewer, but that the viewer acts back at what his eye takes in. Well, weren't we students interacting with "it

*A thought: the French language has a dainty fluidity and gentle clarity of sound and manner of expression that are equivalent to the dainty fluidity and gentle clarity so often expressed in French painting. And could it be an accident that the "swirl" came to the traditions of painting from Italy, where the sounds of the language roll and swirl? Just say "Tintoretto," especially with a rolling of the "r"!

all" the entire time—not just with the paintings, but also with the Barnes method, with the teachers, the other students, with that particular place we were at that particular time? At least, we should have been. The total of this set of interactions—that experience shared by that group of which I was a member at that point in my life—made all the difference in the world in my experience at the Foundation. I was affected by all that was around me and also in return affected it, as did everyone and everything present. And isn't life in general one big interaction made of many little ones? I am, in fact, interacting with you, the reader, and with myself as I write; I interact with my pen and the paper I use as I draw out the words and the sentences, as I "press out" (express) the points I wish to make in this letter.

It is, I think, a great misfortune that, too often, what should be a full, open interaction between people and painting and places and nature and things turns out to be a mere one-way action, the deed of an automaton, without life or meaning—this occurring in a society that goes along with it, that even sanctions it. Indeed, the educational system under which I was reared did its best to nurture my blind spots: in art and elsewhere it never guided me in what to look for, and what it did show usually had little or nothing to do with the world outside my school. I did not even see that I could not see, though it was an artist that I was trying to be. And then, frustrated and confused and ready to quit, I found myself at the Barnes Foundation gates.

It is not uncommon to experience "last resorts" as best solutions to problems, but it seems a pity that one turns to the "last resort" last and not first. On second thought, however, it also seems quite possible that the experience gathered along the way to the "last resort" is what makes one ripe and ready for a full interaction with the right things at the right time and place.

At any rate, discouraged by my confusion and my inability to do what I set out to do in art, I viewed my enrollment in the Foundation's program as a "last resort." And, lo and behold, for the first time things began to make

sense. I studied with zeal and interest; I became my own examiner and my own "marker." I began to learn to see what I had missed seeing during my earlier "education" and to see in the full sense of the word, with total involvement of all I had and was. And, as I worked in the classroom, the world outside the school began to manifest itself in a new way, to have coherence, to be very much there (it had been there all along!) and to acquire meanings in the sense of specific qualities that enriched and deepened my ongoing experience. My present interaction with the Dutch art tradition, people and land exemplifies this for me, and it is at this point that I shall leave my detour and step back to the main road of my letter.

Two years or so ago, fresh and refreshed from my course of study at The Barnes Foundation, I went to Holland, where I have since lived. Of course, I already "knew" that country, for I had, in other years, frequently stopped there for short visits on my way east. Thus, I never suspected that I would be hit, as it were, by the Dutch tradition or that I would discover as if for the first time what this land was like. Yes, I was aware beforehand that Holland is small, that distances between places are short, that the land is flat, that it gets lots of rain, just as I was aware that America is big, distances are great, and so on . . . and what of it? More facts to tuck away in an over-crowded storehouse of information which I was already beginning to resent for not knowing what to do with. (It should be mentioned that I'd had a general "suspicion" that there is an effect of the size and shape of a land over its inhabitants, though I did not know whether to call the study of that effect "psychogeography" or "geographo-psychology.")

Now, however, I came to the familiar country with a new understanding of the Dutch tradition of painting, its quality of intimacy, its drama of dark and light, its general low-key tonality, its small-scale character, its preoccupation with the episodic and the nearby. And that knowledge made all the difference.

Still, my discoveries did not occur all at once. Since my

stay was to be lengthy, obviously I had the chance for a consistent and continuous interaction with Dutch life and art from my new perspective. This interaction took place at times out of sheer necessity and not always consciously.

"It is in the summertime that, one learns how to [ice]skate," as William James said, and now, all of a sudden, the first summer was over, the lessons I took in winter had settled in, and I could "ice-skate": I was seeing. And, once I began to see, there was no way back. Of course, a lot can be accomplished also with less time available, once one knows what to look for, but there is, nevertheless, something more to be gotten from a long-term study—as with seeing a painting once *vs.* coming back to it and seeing it again and again, always finding more.

Let me show you something of the Holland that began to open itself to me. As we know, people, like constituents of a painting, affect their surroundings as they are affected by them. Historically, we also know that Holland in the seventeenth century broke away from Spain, and we note that in the development of the traditions in painting there was a concurrent shift of activity from Spain to Holland.

It is not within the framework of this letter to examine the social, economic and psychological aspects of the turn of events which brought about also a shift in interest among the Dutch painters from the church and court "down" to the common people, their lives and countryside. This was reflected in the fact that common people replaced the church and the court as patrons of the arts, commissioning and buying paintings to be hung in their own houses.

It is self-evident that the development of the traditions in art or elsewhere is by no means a matter of happenstance, but, rather, the result of a complex set of human interactions and of evolution. Furthermore, today, three centuries away from the Dutch tradition of art of the 1600s, those same essentials that characterized it then are still to be found in Holland, as the nature of what affected and brought about the Dutch tradition is basically un-

changed (with a few "modern" modifications, or, perhaps, in spite of them).

Intimacy means closeness. In life, when we speak of intimate or close friends, we mean those people to whom we make things about ourselves known. A close friend, for being close, may see us in our working clothes, and we would not hesitate to let him or her into our kitchen—the real one and the spiritual one. There are few or no secrets between us; our doors and windows are open to our intimate friends.

"The general effect of genre-painting is intimacy, an obviously though not profoundly appealing human quality," said Dr. Barnes.* With Dutch painting, we are at once let into the house, the kitchen even, by the illustrative portrayal of everyday life—women handling linen or playing the harpsichord or sweeping the floor (*e.g.,* "The Linen Cupboard," Plate 45, by Pieter de Hooch, and "Interior with Woman Playing the Harpsichord," Plate 44, by Emanuel de Witte). We are let in by way of the picture makeup as well, virtually led to peep through doors and windows, as, in "Interior with Woman Playing the Harpsichord," our eye is made to follow, for instance, patterns of light and dark receding rhythmically, and angular shapes recurring with eye-catching variety. Indeed, the invitation extends all the way to the very back of the house, where we discover a female figure sweeping the floor and, at the same time, participating, by way of her garments, head-cover and broom, in the general dark-and-light rhythm of the picture composition. Nor do we stop there, for, after pausing for a moment on the figure, we are shown, finally, by way of another "figure" (suggested by what says trees), into the garden behind the house. But our eye is not simply given a quick tour, front to back, and hurried out into the garden. Instead, it is encouraged by all kinds of details to dally on its way, to

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*Albert C. Barnes, *The Art in Painting,* Third Edition, Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., New York, 1937, p. 227. For a detailed discussion of genre painting, see also "Encounter," by Patricia Neubauer, *The Barnes Foundation Journal of the Art Department,* Spring, 1977, The Barnes Foundation Press, Merion, PA., pp. 51–54.

move back and forth from object to object, lingering here on a mound of rags, there on part of a wall clock, a bucket, a chair, chandeliers, and so on.

The same gracious invitation to see everything occurs in Dutch landscape painting. In Jacob van Ruisdael's "View of Haarlem" (Plate 37), for example, we are taken into the scene by an X-formation, one arm of which starts at the lower left, moves through an opening in the trees and continues to the uppermost right side of the horizon, while the other arm starts at the lower right, continues up through the bushes in the center to the leftmost top tower. The pattern of light also guides our eye over the landscape, beginning at the corner on the lower right, moving on to the farmhouses and through the middle band of light and on to the band of light at the horizon. As well as leading our eye, this light also illuminates for us all sorts of details along the way that are presented in a small-scale fashion which at one and the same time suggests distance and participation in its creation.

Holland is, indeed, a small, flat land; distances are not great, and often the end of one village is the beginning of the next, with only a name-board between the two to mark the border. Because of the low horizon, villages and towns are visible as far as the eye can see, causing everything to appear to be close by, familiar, filled with detail. The flatness of the land is conducive to travel by bicycle, which means, for the rider, a closer contact with the landscape than he would have were he to travel by auto, as well as closer eye-contact with his fellow travellers than is possible among people riding in cars. In fact, driving a car in Holland is rather an unpleasant experience, for the narrowness of the streets in combination with the great number of cars in proportion to the size of the land enforces a proximity neither welcome nor comfortable—an overdose, as it were, of closeness.

Again, small land, therefore small houses, and all of them close together so that everyone can fit; little pieces of garden squeezed behind the houses, with little beds of flowers and vegetables. The population is dense and space sorely limited (to date, land is still being claimed from the

sea). I have never known a more efficient use of space, both inside and out. A good practical example is the type of shower that was constructed in the 1950s: to enter it, one must climb up onto a cupped platform, which is the shower floor; this platform is at waist height to someone standing on the floor of the room and therefore serves also as the wash basin, with room underneath, incidentally, for storage. Though this kind of shower is no longer being built, the principle behind its design still obtains: everything is built as compactly as possible; people live almost, so to speak, in each other's lap. And the look of it all is, indeed, suggestive of intimacy—an effect enhanced also by the fact that curtains enframing typically large windows are often left undrawn, allowing any and every passerby to look in on the life of the household, as well as letting in every possible bit of daylight. But on that more later.

It is important to note at this point that we are discussing a visual quality: things *appear* close. This does not necessarily mean that, by virtue of the visual closeness, the kind of intimacy we speak of as occurring between friends also exists. The two should not be confused. As a matter of interest and fact, for all their physical closeness, the Dutch are closed in themselves and tend to hold back their emotions, information, etc. I suppose this might be a form of psychological self-protection, a holding tight to the meager piece of one's own territory. By way of contrast, I cannot help but think of America, the size of a continent, where gigantic buildings are constructed, gigantic canvasses painted, gigantic soup cans portrayed—all so wasteful of space and other materials, which are readily, perhaps too readily, available. It is no coincidence that Holland created the Madurodam, a Lilliputian version of a Dutch city (in a park in The Hague), while the U.S.A. produced two Disneylands.

As I sit now at my desk near a very big window, a sudden flood of sunlight comes to surprise a grim, gray afternoon. Quite often the sun plays "theater electrician," suddenly switching on the light over one area and gradually turning it off. In the course of an afternoon, I may have to pull my curtains back and forth quite a few times to adjust the

interior of my room to the changing light and dark of the outside. Yes, I see that the drama of dark and light, one of those qualities of the Dutch tradition in painting I alluded to earlier, is pulling at my sleeve, so let's go outdoors for a while.

Travelling on the highways in Holland, which often go through stretches of farm fields populated by sheep and cows, I discovered one day a Dutch landscape enframed by my car window: low horizon, with little houses, little trees, maybe a windmill, a typical pointed church tower, all silhouetted against a high area of sky. There is a drama of dark landscape against light sky, a dramatic contrast between the miniature quality of the landscape that fills the land to the low horizon line and the vastness of the sky, with its bold pattern of clouds—effects that one sees also in such paintings as "View of Haarlem" (Plate 37) and "Wheatfields" (Plate 47), by Jacob van Ruisdael.

The sky itself presents another drama within the drama of its contrast with the land: dark grays yield to whites and then come back again throughout; large curl formations are played against smooth patches of blue "holes." Again, the eye is led in and out. In the meadows below, this drama within drama is repeated by such features as the cows, with their bold patches of black and white, set into the stretches of green field.

Sometimes in the late afternoon, the sun, low in the sky, sneaks from under the heavy load of clouds to cast dramatic shadows of dark across the lighted landscape—again, an effect that recurs in Ruisdael's "View of Haarlem," among many other Dutch paintings of the seventeenth century. With my knowledge of Dutch painting, I could now "borrow the eyes" of the artists and find more and more of this kind of drama in the scene before me, and, interacting further with the newly-seen landscape and the Dutch tradition of art, I even made my own sketch of the occasion from my own point of interest in a linoleum cut entitled "Dutch Landscape" (Plate 46).

On winter days when I am out in wooded areas, I sometimes see the sun sending, through heavy clouds and tree branches, a slanting ray of concentrated light that strongly illuminates, and thus focalizes, an area, the edges of which quickly melt back into the surrounding darkness. It is, to my eyes, a Rembrandt painted by nature. I have seen Rembrandt's work and what he did with chiaroscuro, and now I see that same effect of light in part through his expression of it. Possibly Rembrandt himself had also seen a similar scene, as in his "The Stone Bridge" (Plate 48), but the meaning of that light is equally conveyed in his figure studies, as we can see in "The Jewish Bride" (Plate 49).*

Very dramatic landscape, very intriguing "skyscape," but very gloomy weather much too often. Sunlight is never in abundance, hence is the color low-key. For days on end the sky is gray, sometimes in a monochrome that creates a closed-in feeling, as if the heavens were hanging just over one's head. It rains a lot, too, and it is not, in general, weather of a type to tempt one to spend much time outdoors.

The Dutch have a remedy for this dreary climate; they make their interiors cozy. Indeed, they are famous for their *gezelligheid,* coziness, a quality which is related to intimacy. (A "cozy" is a padded cover to be placed over a teapot to retain heat, and the adjective "cozy" means comfortable, sheltered, well enclosed). Dutch interiors, then, made to be functional to their occupants, with a practical use of space, have also a charm of atmosphere that renders them pleasant to be in. The houses are small, but the windows are big, especially in the front, to allow in as much light as possible, and are decorated with all sorts of knick-knacks (a love of detail?), little colored glass bottles, pitchers and a great many plants, all placed with an

*What's in a name? Near the painting in the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, I overheard someone remark: "What makes her Jewish, and what makes her a bride?" The answer is: nothing that is inherent to the painting as a painting.

eye for pleasing composition—perhaps a modern version of the seventeenth-century Dutch still life.

As the sun comes through the window and door openings, yet another light-dark drama is played—this one of angular shapes, varied in size and direction according to the size and shape of the opening, its location in the house and the direction and availability of light at a given time on a given day. Again, Emanuel de Witte's "Interior with Woman Playing the Harpsichord" (Plate 44) is called to mind.

I could go on and on, telling you of my sudden discovery of the Dutch workers, their blue overalls, as van Gogh showed them, or of the red roof that van Gogh also painted, jumping out of its setting as his does in "Thatches in the Sunshine (Reminiscence of the North)" (Plate 39). And the compositional framework of geometric angular shapes (made by windows, doorways, walls, stone floors, furniture, etc.)—within which framework vignettes of daily activities are tendered to us in such paintings as Jan Vermeer's "The Little Street" (Plate 41), de Witte's "Interior with Woman Playing the Harpsichord" (Plate 44), de Hooch's "The Linen Cupboard" (Plate 45) and Gabriel Metsu's "The Sick Child" (Plate 40)—projects my mind three centuries forward, as I now see the bare bones, this geometric framework, of the Dutch paintings having become the mainstay of the work of the modern Dutch painter Piet Mondrian (*e.g.,* Plate 42) and of the furniture and architectural designs of his compatriot Gerrit Rietveld (*e.g.,* Plates 51 and 43). I discovered, too, that the contrasts of emphatic horizontality against emphatic verticality, typical of the work of these two men, bear a family relationship to the horizontality and verticality characteristic of the Dutch countryside itself. Again, there are so many things to be found and understood when one's eyes have been opened to the meanings of various qualities and when one's seeing has been enriched by the knowledge of what others have seen and expressed.

I begin to be aware of the influence of the Dutch tradition of painting and countryside in some of my own work, a fact which further shows me that my eyes have,

indeed, been opened. My earlier background is, of course, an active part of my present interaction with Holland and the Dutch tradition; it comes into what I do and see now, whether I am aware of it or not, whether I see it in the doing or only later, after it's all been done.

Well, one must stop somewhere, and I choose this point to close this letter, thinking to myself that, as my journey in this world keeps on, I cannot but be forever grateful to The Barnes Foundation and to my teachers there, who gave me a golden key for a treasure box—a way to discover and perceive art in . . . possibly all things.

Navâh

The Case of the Inverted Commas

by Gilbert M. Cantor*

The following, I believe, is the *Ode on a Grecian Urn* as John Keats wrote it:

I

Thou still unravish'd bride of quietness,
Thou foster-child of silence and slow time,
Sylvan historian, who canst thus express
A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme:
What leaf-fring'd legend haunts about thy shape
Of deities or mortals, or of both,
In Tempe or the dales of Arcady?
What men or gods are these? What maidens loth?
What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?
What pipes and timbrels? What wild ecstasy?

II

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;
Not to the sensual ear, but, more endear'd,
Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone:
Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leave
Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare;
Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss,
Though winning near the goal—yet, do not grieve;
She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss,
For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair!

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III

Ah, happy, happy boughs! that cannot shed
Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring adieu;
And, happy melodist, unwearied,
For ever piping songs for ever new;
More happy love! more happy, happy love!
For ever warm and still to be enjoy'd,
For ever panting, and for ever young;
All breathing human passion far above,
That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and cloy'd,
A burning forehead, and a parching tongue.

IV

Who are these coming to the sacrifice?
To what green altar, O mysterious priest,
Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies,
And all her silken flanks with garlands drest?
What little town by river or sea shore,
Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,
Is emptied of this folk, this pious morn?
And, little town, thy streets for evermore
Will silent be; and not a soul to tell
Why thou art desolate, can e'er return.

V

O Attic shape! Fair attitude! with brede
Of marble men and maidens overwrought,
With forest branches and the trodden weed;
Thou, silent form, dost tease us out of thought
As doth eternity: Cold Pastoral!
When old age shall this generation waste,
Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe
Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say'st,
"Beauty is truth, truth beauty,"–that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

Nearly one hundred and sixty years after Keats wrote the *Ode on a Grecian Urn*, its concluding lines continue to boggle the critical mind. Indeed, to assert: "Beauty is truth, truth beauty," and then to add as a deeper irritant

"—that is all / Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know," is simultaneously to challenge interpretation and to invite repudiation.

Reactions to these lines have been, in the words of John Middleton Murry, "strangely various."[1] Of the earlier critics, Murry first cites Dr. Robert Bridges, who wrote: "The last stanza enters stumbling upon a pun, but its concluding lines are very fine, and make a sort of recovery with their forcible directness."[2] While Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch bluntly concluded:

> But, of course, to put it solidly, that is a vague observation—to any one whom life has taught to face facts and define his terms, actually an uneducated conclusion, albeit pardonable in one so young.[3]

More recently, I. A. Richards endeavored to justify Keats's beauty-truth dictum as a "pseudo-statement," a statement which "is 'true' if it suits and serves some attitude or links together attitudes which on other grounds are desirable." He further states, "This kind of truth is so opposed to scientific 'truth' that it is a pity to use so similar a word, but at present it is difficult to avoid the malpractice. . . . A pseudo-statement is a form of words which is justified entirely by its effect in releasing or organizing our impulses and attitudes."[4]

T. S. Eliot's oft-quoted rejection of Richards' view reads as follows:

> I am at first inclined to agree with [Richards], because this statement of equivalence means nothing to me. But on re-reading the whole Ode, this line strikes me as a serious blemish on a beautiful poem; and the reason must be that I fail to understand it, or that it is a statement which is untrue. And I suppose that Keats meant something by it, however remote his truth and his beauty may have been from these words in ordinary use. And I am sure that he would have repudiated any explanation of the line which called it a

> pseudo-statement. On the other hand the line I have often quoted of Shakespeare,
>
> "Ripeness is all"
>
> or the line I have quoted of Dante,
>
> "la sua voluntade e nostra pace"
>
> strikes very differently on my ear. I observe that the propositions in these words are very different in kind, not only from that of Keats but from each other. The statement of Keats seems to me meaningless: or perhaps the fact that it is grammatically meaningless conceals another meaning from me. The statement of Shakespeare seems to me to have profound emotional meaning, with at least, no literal fallacy. And the statement of Dante seems to me *literally true*.[5]

And Cleanth Brooks, in an essay to which I shall give further attention below, replies to Eliot's response to Richards:

> Keats's lines strike [Eliot] as false; Shakespeare's on the other hand, as not clearly false, and as possibly quite true. Shakespeare's generalization, in other words, avoids raising the question of truth. But is it really a question of truth and falsity? One is tempted to account for the difference of effect which Eliot feels in this way: "Ripeness is all" is a statement put in the mouth of a dramatic character and a statement which is governed and qualified by the whole context of the play. It does not directly challenge an examination into its truth because its relevance is pointed up and modified by the dramatic context.
>
> Now, suppose that one could show that Keats's lines, *in quite the same way,* constitute a speech, a consciously riddling paradox, put in the mouth of a particular character, and modified by the whole context of the poem. If we could demonstrate that the speech was "in character," was dramatically appropriate, was properly prepared for—then would not the lines have all the justification of "Ripeness is all?" In such case, should we not have waived the question of the scientific or philosophic truth of the lines in favor of the application of a principle curiously like that of dramatic propriety? I suggest that some such principle is the only one legitimately to be involved in any case.[6]

With respect to this thesis, two observations are pertinent. The first is that the Brooks essay, in my opinion, succeeds admirably in demonstrating that Keats's aphorism has the same status and justification as Shakespeare's "Ripeness is all," that it "is a speech 'in character' and supported by a dramatic context."[7] The second is that, while Brooks' approach at first blush seems to evade the issue of the truth or falsity of Keats's statement, it also recognizes that to conclude on the principle of dramatic propriety alone would not be fair to the complexity of the problem of truth in art or to Keats's parable. What Brooks claims for the principle, and justly as I see it, is that it places the problem of truth "at the level on which it is really relevant to literature." And he goes on to explain, "If we can see that the assertions made in a poem are to be taken as part of an organic context, if we can resist the temptation to deal with them in isolation, then we may be willing to go on to deal with the world-view, or 'philosophy', or 'truth' of the *poem as a whole* in terms of its dramatic wholeness; that is, we should not neglect the maturity of attitude, the dramatic tension, the emotional *and* intellectual coherence in favor of some statement of theme abstracted from it by paraphrase."[8]

But the controversy continues. Even today, as Burnshaw tells us, "a dozen critics continue to look for ways of accepting 'Beauty is truth, truth beauty—that is all / Ye know on earth and all ye need to know.' Coming at the climax of Keats's Ode, its claim on belief is crucial. But though the 'special language' and 'autonomous world' apologists 'shift the emphasis from truth of correspondence to truth of coherence' or to 'primary structural relationship', they cannot, of course, alter the response of any reader who is unable to grasp the proposition or who regards it as quite untrue."[9]

The reader may have noticed that the punctuation of Keats's lines in the preceding quotation from Burnshaw differs from their punctuation in the poem as it appears at the beginning of this essay. Let us pause to deal with this problem. The determination of what in fact Keats wrote should precede our inquiry as to the meaning of what he wrote.

The version in which the quotation marks surround "Beauty is truth, truth beauty" (only) is the version of the poem which is used in several collections of Keats's poems, including those edited by H. Buxton Forman (Thomas Y. Crowell & Company, 1895) and Jack Shillinger (Harvard University Press, 1978), as well as the Modern Library *Keats and Shelley* (Random House, Inc.). Keats's *1820* volume (sometimes called the *Lamia* volume, probably published in July of that year), which was followed in these editions, had the controversial quotation marks.

The version which appeared in *Annals of the Fine Arts* (No. XV, Jan. 1820) was—

> Beauty is truth, Truth Beauty,—This is all
> Ye know on Earth, and all ye need to know.

—a version in which the omission of the inverted commas does not suggest a different interpretation.

On the other hand, in the following form (sometimes with minor variations)—

> Beauty is truth,—Truth Beauty.—This is all
> Ye know on Earth and all ye need to know.

—it is more difficult to read the first five words as an utterance separate from the balance of the couplet, and the significance of this is discussed below. This form is defended by a number of critics, including Walter Jackson Bate, who tells us that all four transcripts of the poems (those of George Keats, Brown, Woodhouse, and Dilke; there is no autograph MS) "lack a full stop after 'truth beauty,' lack quotation marks, and by dashes break the final lines not into two parts but three." He adds, "That of Dilke is typical: 'Beauty is truth,—truth beauty,—that is all. . . .' "[10] So says Jacob Wigod also, citing Alvin Whitley, in "The Message of the Grecian Urn," *Keats-Shelley Memorial Bulletin,* No. 5, ed. Dorothy Hewlett (London, 1953), pp 1–3.[11]

Cleanth Brooks uses a version not quite the same as any of those above noted, and without explanation:

Beauty is truth, truth beauty, —that is all,
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.[12]

In John Barnard's edition of Keats's poems (Penguin Books, 1973), he places inverted commas around the last two lines of the poem in their entirety. He does so in support of his own reading of the poem, but acknowledges that "Keats saw the *1820* volume through the press, which gives it some priority."[13] This either reflects or supports Murry's assertion that "Keats corrected his 1820 volume with care."[14]

The dispute as to which version is "correct" cannot be settled with finality. I have accepted the *1820* version not merely because of its familiarity or for the possibility or probability that Keats approved it in the publication process, but also for the more powerful reason that the lines in this form "make sense."[15]

I come, then, to the question which the mercurial quotation marks necessarily raise: in the concluding couplet, who is addressing whom?

In Barnard's notes on the Ode, five possibilities are listed:[16]

1. Both lines are spoken by the urn and addressed to man.
2. The lines are spoken by the poet to the urn.
3. The lines are spoken by the poet to the figures on the urn.
4. "Beauty is truth, truth beauty" is spoken by the urn, and the remainder is the poet speaking to his readers.
5. The motto, as in the preceding reading, is spoken by the urn, but the poet then addresses the urn, not mankind.

While some of the critics are quite explicit about their interpretations, others leave us to infer from their comments which of the five possibilities they have adopted. Let me say at this point that the fifth suggestion appears to me to be correct.

First of all: It seems to me indisputable, on reading *any* version of the couplet, that the words "Beauty is truth, truth beauty" are uttered by the urn. The concluding

stanza as a whole is addressed by Keats to the urn: "O Attic shape! . . . *Thou, silent form,*" etc. "When old age shall this generation waste, *thou* shalt remain a friend of man, to whom *thou say'st,* 'Beauty is truth, truth beauty.' " This rules out the second and third of the five versions listed above.

Option 4, insofar as it postulates that the remainder of the couplet is addressed by the poet to his readers (and thus to mankind), is not a natural reading, as mankind has been "us" and "ours" in the concluding stanza and there is no preparation for a direct address by the poet to us. Beyond that, this reading introduces the "extravagant statement" which is taken by some critics as merely false and is twisted by others (as we shall see) to meanings that cannot be derived from materials within the "four corners" of the poem. In the latter category I place John Middleton Murry and Cleanth Brooks, whose interpretations we shall now examine.

Murry first. Recognizing that it is the *urn* which says "Beauty is Truth, Truth Beauty," Murry notes that it is not the urn but the poet himself who adds the balance of the couplet.[17] He assumes, however, that the poet's comment is addressed to the reader. This takes him far afield. For whatever the meaning of the urn's message may be, surely it cannot be all we know on earth. And if it is, even more surely it cannot be all we need to know! *Unless*—a supposition Murry persuades himself to accept—unless the Beauty-Truth equation somehow holds within it, like a celestial fortune cookie, the central truth of human existence.

The logic of Murry's reading of the stanza leads him to make such a claim for the asserted identity of Truth and Beauty. When the poet hears the urn's message, according to Murry, he cries: "That is all ye know," et cetera. Murry explains, "That is, of course, in the literal and grammatical sense, untrue. It is not 'all we know'; and some of us do not know it at all. But Keats's meaning is unmistakable. If we know that 'Beauty is Truth, Truth Beauty,' we have attained the topmost stretch of human knowledge; we know, as it were, the secret—the one thing needful."[18]

And what is this ultimate secret? A message of comfort in human woe, as the stanza says. The figures of the urn pass into the spellbound land of eternity, "all breathing passion far above," and the poet, says Murry, envies and grieves for them. "The Urn is the record of the lovely and yet fatal enchantment,"[19] in effect, a mode by which all of human life can be seen or imagined in a moment of untroubled lucidity in which we are spectators of the great drama of human destiny.[20] And so on, to this unfortunate passage:

> For this vision there are indeed no words. Keats declared it in the form: "Beauty is Truth, Truth Beauty." The words to many are meaningless. And it is certain that by no poring over the words themselves can the vision which they express be attained. Nor, probably, if we turn them about, like a jewel of many facets, will they reflect a gleam.
>
> We may turn them in many ways. We may say that the Real is Beautiful. The answer straightaway is that the Real is full of ugliness and pain. And this is true: who will deny it? But the Beauty of the Real is a Beauty which resides as surely in pain and ugliness as in beauty itself. There is the Sorrow which makes Sorrow more beautiful than Beauty's self.
>
> But that sorrow may still be called, by our human standards, beautiful. The Beauty of the Real is beyond this. It lies in the perfection of ugliness which belongs to every thing, or thought, simply because it *is*.[21]

Finally, Murry tells us that Keats has uttered a saying of the same order and worthy to stand with such great sayings, for those who understand them, as "God is Love" and "*Omni existentia est perfectio.*"[22] As such, it is "all we know and all we need to know." He then says, "The only statements of the same order, which seem to other minds more deeply true, will be found at the last to be saying the same thing in other words."[23]

The plain fact is that John Keats was not saying God is Love or anything like that. The terrible strain behind Murry's thesis could have been avoided by the recognition

that, while it was indeed Keats and not the urn who said "That is all ye know," and so on, *he said it to the urn—not to the reader.*

Brooks notes at the outset that the poem itself is obviously intended to be a parable on the nature of poetry and of art in general[24] (I would say, a parable on the nature of visual art—which Keats in fact contrasts with poetry: "Sylvan historian, who canst thus express / A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme"—and of art in general). Indeed, Keats chooses an object of visual art for his subject in part because what it "says" cannot be confused, as in the literary arts, with the words which constitute its medium. This distinction, however, does not affect Brooks' interpretation of the concluding couplet, which is precisely this:

> "Formed experience," imaginative insight, embodies the basic and fundamental perception of man and nature. The urn is beautiful, and yet its beauty is based—what else is the poem concerned with?—on an imaginative perception of essentials. Such a vision is beautiful but it is also true. The sylvan historian presents us with beautiful histories, but they are true histories, and it is a good historian.
>
> Moreover, the "truth" which the sylvan historian gives is the only kind of truth which we are likely to get on this earth, and, furthermore, it is the only kind that we *have* to have. The names, dates, and special circumstances, the wealth of data—these the sylvan historian quietly ignores. But we shall never get all the facts anyway—there is no end to the accumulation of facts. Moreover, mere accumulation of facts—a point our own generation is only beginning to realize—are meaningless. The sylvan historian does better than that: it takes a few details and so orders them that we have not only beauty but insight into essential truth.[25]

To be sure, Brooks' explanation still requires explanation, burdened as it is with "imaginative insight," "beauty," "imaginative perception of essentials," and "essential truth," words and phrases to which we are accustomed but which themselves convey no precise meaning. Nevertheless, Brooks, insofar as the Truth-Beauty equation is

concerned, achieved what he set out to do and others had failed to do: to derive his explanation from the poem itself, to recognize that the message is an esthetic concept embodied in the urn (as an example of successful works of art), and to recognize that the meaning of the message is the identity of the esthetic success of the work with its hold on the kind of truth that a work of art can express.

With the final message ("That is all," etc.) taken as Keats's word to the reader, Brooks is less successful. Murry dealt with the resulting "extravagant assertion" by inflating the Truth-Beauty utterance to the level of "God is Love," a level befitting a claim to Sole and Universal Truth. Brooks goes in the opposite direction. He resolves the problem by devaluing the kinds of truth which art does not express: they become a "mere accumulation of facts," and as such, "meaningless."

Lionel Trilling ignores the quotation marks in the penultimate line and apparently regards the last two lines as the poet's pronouncement to the reader. Many readers, he tells us, "may consent to be teased, but they cannot suppose they are enlightened by the statement, 'Beauty is truth, truth beauty,' for, as they say, beauty is not all of truth, and not all truth is beautiful. Nor will they be the more disposed to find meaning in the notorious aphorism by the poet's extravagant assertion that in it is to be found 'all / Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.' "[26]

Trilling, with help from Keats's letters, ascribes to Keats the view that a great poet, such as Shakespeare, "looks at human life, sees the terrible truth of its evil, but sees it so intensely that it becomes an element of the beauty which is created by his own act of perception—in the phrase by which Keats describes his own experience as merely a reader of *King Lear*, he 'burns through' the evil. To say, as many do, that 'truth is beauty' is a false statement is to ignore our experience of the tragic art. Keats's statement is an accurate description of the response to evil or ugliness which tragedy makes: the matter of tragedy is ugly or painful truth seen as beauty. To see life in this way, Keats believes, is to see life truly: that is, as it must be seen if we are to endure to live it. Beauty is thus a middle term which

connects and reconciles two kinds of truth—through the mediation of beauty, truth of fact becomes truth of affirmation, truth of life."[27]

What Trilling says in this passage may be interesting, and it may indeed be true to Keats's "philosophy," though it seems to me that Keats here begins to sound more and more like Trilling. But Trilling is not persuasive in regard to the poem itself. This is partly due to his use of phrases which themselves carry no clear or definite meaning: "truth of fact becomes *truth of affirmation, truth of life*"(!) It is due also to the fact that his explanation is only partial: he "explains" how "truth is beauty" but not quite how "beauty is truth," nor are we told how his explanation justifies the extravagant assertion that that is all we know and all we need to know.

Trilling's version comes not from the poem itself but from sources extrinsic to it, and it does not seem to fit the poem half as well as it fits Trilling's essay. For the work of art addressed in the poem is not *Lear*, it is the vase. There are indeed unhappy overtones, as in "Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss/ Though winning near the goal" and "little town, thy streets for evermore/ Will silent be; and not a soul to tell/ Why thou art desolate, can e'er return." But there is more of happiness than tragedy; there is "wild ecstasy," and there are the "unheard melodies," and the Bold Lover is consoled: "do not grieve;/ She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss/ For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair!" And again: "More happy love! more happy, happy love! For ever warm and still to be enjoy'd/ For ever panting, and for ever young."

Generally, the critics who have looked beyond the poem itself have found little reward for their efforts. It may be true, for example, as Murry tells us, that the time at which Keats wrote the Ode "was a time of great happiness indeed but greater misery. A brother dead, a brother exiled, the fear that his newborn love would be denied fulfilment, his money gone, his health and perhaps his life in question—such was Keats's part of the human woe to which, he declared, the Grecian Urn brought comfort."[28] Yet it is difficult to perceive that these facts add anything of critical worth to the poem's postulate that "When old age shall this

generation waste / Thou [urn] shall remain, in midst of other woe / Than ours, a friend to man."[29] And Trilling's insistence on Keats's "clear knowledge of evil"[30] seems to me neither necessary to interpretation nor more helpful than Murry's catalogue of the poet's personal woes.

Nor does Murry help measurably by lugging into the discussion Keats's statement elsewhere: "The excellence of every art is its intensity, capable of making all disagreeables evaporate from their being in close relationship with Beauty and Truth."[31] Or Trilling with this remark: "I am certain of nothing but of the holiness of the heart's affections and the truth of the Imagination—What the Imagination seizes as Beauty must be truth—Whether it existed before or not—for I have the same Idea of all our Passions as of Love they are all, in their sublime, creative of essential Beauty. . . . The Imagination may be compared to Adam's dream [in *Paradise Lost*]—he awoke and found it truth."[32]

Such passages may be even more needful of interpretation, and less susceptible of it, than the assertion about Truth and Beauty attributed to the urn in the poem. To introduce them strikes me as an effort to prove *ignotum per ignotius*, which serves merely to confuse the issue. The question to which we are here addressing ourselves is not Keats's general or total philosophy, or his philosophy of art, but the meaning of a particular epigram in a particular poem. The poem should be, and I believe we shall find it to be, sufficient to give the meaning of its parts.

Cleanth Brooks deals directly and correctly with the business of deriving the meaning of the lines from extraneous sources:

> We shall not find our answer there even if scholarship does prefer on principle investigations of Browning's ironic question, "What porridge had John Keats?" For even if we know just what porridge he had, physical and mental, we should still not be able to settle the problem of the "Ode." The reason should be clear: *our specific question is not what did Keats the man perhaps want to assert here about the relation of beauty and truth; it is rather: was Keats the poet able to exemplify that relation in this particular poem?*[33] [Emphasis mine.]

Let us turn now to our own interpretation of the puzzling lines. We should recognize first that they deal with an esthetic question. Nothing more or less. Throughout, the poet addresses a figured urn, which is a work of art. And a certain paradox emerges: we do not know whom the figures on the urn represent, we do not know the nature of their journey, we do not know where they came from or where they are going, and we shall never be told; in short, the factual or historical meaning of the scene on the urn is irretrievably lost to us. We know only that the characters are arrested in an instant out of time and are thus "All breathing passion far above / That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and cloy'd / A burning forehead, and a parching tongue."

And yet, although or because the urn in its silence, like the concept of eternity itself, "dost tease us out of thought," and although or because the urn is aloof and inhuman ("Cold Pastoral!"), being out of time and "all breathing passion far above," the work of art somehow is and shall remain a friend to man beset by human woes. How can this be?

The answer emerges gradually. First of all, there is the urn's appeal to the eye:

> O Attic shape! Fair attitude! with brede
> Of marble men and maidens overwrought.

The urn, we are told, can "express / A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme."

But the urn's appeal or interest goes further:

> Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
> Are sweeter.

Why? Because they are played "not to the sensual ear, but, more endear'd, . . . to the spirit."

And while the figures and objects portrayed, frozen in time, will never reach the goals toward which they move, neither will they fade or perish as they would in the world of actuality: "Ah, happy, happy boughs! That cannot shed / Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring adieu / And,

happy melodist, unwearied / Forever piping songs for ever new."

And, as they are free of time's destructive work, so are they free of human passion's power to sear:

> More happy love, more happy, happy love!
> For ever warm and still to be enjoy'd,
> For ever panting, and for ever young;
> All breathing human passion far above,
> That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and cloy'd,
> A burning forehead, and a parching tongue.

The urn gives us a world of eternal freshness, perpetual youth, undying love, and passion free of pain. The artist has made for us a world "closer to the heart's desire," into which we can enter as can those who follow us. The figures on the urn engage us with their world-rootedness, and yet, stripped of their specific or literal factuality or historicity, plucked entire from the flux of time, pleasing to the eye and to the mind or spirit, they can and will

> Remain, in midst of other woe
> Than ours, a friend to man.

The poem, itself a work of art, is addressed to another work of art, from which it seeks to wrest its meaning—not its specific meaning merely, but its meaning as an exemplar of artistic expression. Finally, Keats takes as the message of the work of art the famous motto: "Beauty is truth, truth beauty." The threshold difficulty with this assertion, taken baldly, is that Beauty has no objective or propositional meaning, whereas Truth has too many meanings. To link the two is to risk "confusion thrice confounded," on its face a jarring and disappointing climax to a poem of specific images so finely wrought.

Perhaps our modern resistance to these words, which have so often been the instruments of intellectual abuse, prevents us from perceiving in them anything other than a "blemish on a fine poem." And yet, if we can manage voluntarily to suspend that prejudgment and to look with fresh eyes at what has been written, the effort may be rewarding—whether or not the final verdict is altered.

Just as water poured on a table may run in any direction, or in several, whereas water poured into a container or mold will assume the latter's shape, so with words like Truth and Beauty. Dropped into a discussion, without definition, they will have no form or meaning, but they may be so positioned in a poem that the surrounding materials will limit their flow and shape them into a meaningful part of the work. I suggest that this has been accomplished in the Ode.

What is the "Truth" with which the work of art is concerned and which can be identified with its "Beauty"? First of all, since the artist is neither a reporter nor a photographer, he is not concerned with, and we do not seek in his work, a mere rendering of the facts. Objects may be recognizable, and historical truths may occur in works of art, but this does not make them art.[34] We do not ask the artist to "tell the truth" about an object or event, to "tell it like it is." Rather, we ask him to tell it *as he sees it*, so that the truth involved must be a truth relative to his vision.

Nor do we look to art for scientific or empirical truth. "Art is not in competition with science any more than it is with history."[35] Science has its own vision to present and its special techniques for the clarification and amplification of that vision. If a scientific statement enters into a work of art, its presence is merely incidental; it does not convert the work of art to a scientific treatise.[36]

Even though works of art may contain statements of many kinds, these statements generally do not function as assertions or propositions. A proposition is a statement to which the criterion of truth versus falsity can be applied; it is sometimes defined as "anything which can be said to be true or false." Thus, a table in a corner is not true or false, but the proposition that there is a table in the corner is true or false.[37] Art should not be confused with the propositional truths it may incidentally contain.

Instead of truth-*about* things, which is not the burden of art, there is truth-*to* things, as Hospers points out.[38] This concept, of truth-to things, is also susceptible of confusion.

What Hospers has in mind is not "true to" in the sense of a one-to-one correspondence, as in a photograph true to its subject or a man true to his word. He is talking about truth to human nature. We can verify the artist's insights in our own further observation of people and actions.[39]

Not only is it truth to human character and actions, but to "the felt qualities of experience in general."[40] Eastman on poetry is helpful here: we find poets "more occupied with 'what it feels like' to believe something than with whether it is true."[41]

It boils down to this: in speaking of art being true to an "essence", "we mean something *in* the realm of actual or possible experience which the artist captures, a new way of seeing or feeling things which we can share with him. Without this [sharability] it could not be universal."[42] Hospers offers two further clarifications:

> (1) Perhaps the essence [the artist captures] is true-to his own vision—it probably is; but it is not the truth–to his own vision which is important; what is important is that his vision is and can be the vision of others—that he can "dive into the flux" and come back with a vision that we find "true," that stands the test of experience. The essence is verified by our being conditioned by it in our subsequent perceptions. . . .
>
> (2) It is true of course that we do recognize the individuality of an artist in his work; we can often identify the artist at once when we look at a painting, for example. But when a Cézanne canvas seems to disclose or to reveal to us certain essential qualities of experience and ways of seeing things, the disclosure is not "true" for us simply because it is true–to Cézanne's temperament. If some revealed essence in a painting or poem 'works upon' our temperaments, it is not because the painting is "true-to" the temperament which produced it, but because it reveals, *through* that temperament, something which both he and we can see. The fact that it is true-to Cézanne is incidental to the fact that it is true in the sense we have described.[43]

It should also be understood that the nature or structure of the "truth" involved is metaphoric. Polanyi, in his work entitled *Meaning*, points out that all knowledge and understanding are based on metaphor, which, like a symbol, "carries us away, embodies us in itself, and moves us deeply as we surrender ourselves to it."[44] The metaphoric capacity is "man's basic imaginative capacity for integrating two or more disparate matters into a single novel meaning."[45] Similarly Jaynes, in his book on the "bicameral mind," states: "Understanding a thing is to arrive at a metaphor for that thing by substituting something more familiar to us. And the feeling of familiarity is the feeling of understanding."[46]

There are always two terms in a metaphor, the thing to be described and the thing or relations used to elucidate it. Metaphor is, according to Jaynes, "the very constitutive ground of knowledge. . . . The grand and vigorous function of metaphor is the generation of new language as it is needed, as human culture becomes more and more complex."[47]

Jaynes illustrates this concept with words in common usage, all generated from parts of the human body: the *head* of an army, table, page, bed, ship, household, or nail, or of steam or water; the *face* of a clock, cliff, card, or crystal; the *eyes* of needles, winds, storms, targets, flowers, or potatoes; the *brow* of a hill; the *cheeks* of a vise; the *teeth* of cogs or combs; the *lips* of pitchers, craters, augers; the *tongues* of shoes, boardjoints, or railway switches; the *arm* of the chair or the sea; the *leg* of a table, compass, sailor's voyage, or cricket field; the *foot* of this page. "All of these concrete metaphors increase enormously our powers of perception of the world about us and our understanding of it, and literally create new objects. Indeed, language is an organ of perception, not simply a means of communication."[48]

To try to understand something, as noted above, is to try to find a metaphor for it by substituting for it something more familiar. In art as in science, we proceed in this way. As I have stated elsewhere:

> Since neither words nor numbers nor color areas can be the "thing," the simplest, plain, blunt, statement is *per se* metaphoric. At the same time, the most fanciful myth is true to the degree it deepens understanding and compels assent. . . .
>
> The "truth" of our knowledge of reality lies in the authenticity of our metaphor—that is, that knowledge is true whose metaphor can be verified or authenticated in experience, whether by repetition of experiment or by checking out prediction or by recreating in ourselves [an] artist's expression of his experience.[49]

The success of the artist, then, lies in his integration of expressive, illustrative, and decorative elements into sensuously pleasing works of imaginative insight (the artist's "metaphor") which the reader or viewer can re-create and verify in his own imaginative experience. The work's truth, if we can so verify it, is one with the esthetic satisfaction of "a clearer, more luminous, and imaginatively richer version of the world of nature."[50] Thus we understand: "Beauty is truth, truth beauty."

In the tautological form of this motto, Keats has the urn assert that the truth of a work of art and its esthetic merit or power are coextensive. Says urn to poet: "With my graceful form, with my tensions and contradictions, with the resolution of my incompatible elements in plastic form through the artistic imagination of my unknown creator, I have given you the truth of the artist's vision and you have entered into it." The poet then responds to the urn's assertion by acknowledging that this esthetic truth (metaphoric knowledge) is *the sole burden of the work of art* and is *all we ask of it* (all *it* knows and all *it* needs to know).

Thus, the poet first hears what the work of art "says," namely, that its "truth" and "beauty" are all of a piece: its beauty lies in the strength of the artist's expressed vision, which is also its truth. And the poet responds: "That is all ye know":[51] factuality and historicity are beyond your purpose;[52] "and all ye need to know": no other kinds of truth are required of you.

If my interpretation is consistent with the poem, I have

said not what the poet's words "mean," in the sense of a paraphrase, but I have offered rather a mode of understanding through which the meaning of the words *as they are in the poem* can be taken in and accepted.

Moreover, if this reading is correct, then the urn (work of art) may properly be deemed "a friend to man" not only in its sensuous appeal, and not only in permitting us to enter imaginatively into a world exempt from both the ravages of time and the searing power of human passion, but also in the fundamental contribution of art to man's understanding of and relation to his world, the metaphoric enrichment of life through the expression of renewable imaginative insight.

Having travelled lengthily and tortuously from the troublesome couplet itself through various critics' responses and explications to my own interpretation, let me pause to articulate the "position" at which I have arrived. My conclusions thus far are:

(1) That the motto "Beauty is truth, truth beauty" is spoken by the urn.[53]

(2) That the urn's cryptic utterance properly reflects its meaning as a work of art, the truth of which is coextensive with the metaphoric power of the artist's sharable vision. (If we can read Keats now in "Barnesian" terms to a certain extent, this is due to the fact that Keats recognized and verbalized, in an anticipatory, intuitive way, an aspect of the philosophy and appreciation of art that neither science nor philosophy had yet readied for more methodical articulation.)

(3) That the urn's utterance, as Cleanth Brooks confirmed, is "dramatically prepared for."[54] The dialogic form of the poem, in which the poet speaks to the urn, urging it again and again to yield up its secrets, prepares us for the urn finally to "say" its piece.

(4) That the cryptic message of the urn, like the "nevermore" of Poe's Raven, is also "in character." It is consistent with the urn's visual (rather than verbal) form, with its persistent refusal to tell the story the poet seeks, and with its "teasing" character. In this connection we are reminded by Talbot to "accept that there are oracular

statements that are irreducible and must retain something of the quality of an enigma because that is their function and their character."[55] Urns in common experience do not speak, and the pseudo-speech that the poet has elicited, oracular and enigmatic, is more believable, more in character for the urn, than the extended "interpretation" in which I have indulged.

(5) That the concluding words, "—that is all / Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know," are not the poet's message to the reader or mankind but simply his reply to the urn's dictum[56] and, as such, constitute a perfectly reasonable and sound judgment rather than an "extravagant statement." The poet recognizes here what a work of art offers and also its limitations. In a balanced final assessment, he says, this is what you can give us, and, though life requires more, what you provide is good, you are "a friend to man."

Let us now turn our attention to certain dissonances in the *Ode* which were noted but not discussed as such in the preceding portions of this essay. In doing so, we may discover how the poem itself (the "urn" that Keats has written)[57] exemplifies the meaning of its concluding lines.

Others have noted certain striking contrasts in the *Ode*;[58] for one, the difference between the unexpectedly mournful note introduced at the end of the fourth stanza—

> And, little town, thy streets for evermore
> Will silent be; and not a soul to tell
> Why thou art desolate, can e'er return.

—and the happier mood of the preceding portions, which seem to celebrate the unanswered questions, the strivings and movements that will never find expression or consummation.

There is also the contrast between the "feverishness" of the conclusion of the third stanza

> A burning forehead, and a parching tongue

and "the general air of coolness and stillness surrounding the urn".[59] And, again, between that stillness and

coolness—"silent form," "Cold Pastoral," and the affectionate naming of the urn as "a friend to man."[60]

The "bold lover" and his maiden, though of marble, are described in the third stanza as "for ever panting," and their love "for ever warm." As Mayhead points out, the poet envies their changeless state in the marble pattern and wishes to breathe life into them—in short, to "have it both ways."[61] "Keats does not come down heavily on the side of either Art or Life. The feelings of attraction and repulsion, felt in respect of both, meet and mingle in the poem to form an essential part of its total meaning."[62] And Jones responds to the same ambivalence: "We are led to understand . . . that the deepest and most powerful art cannot make the world young again and warm, *but only known* [my emphasis]."[63]

Here, then, we may ask—and hold forever unresolved—whether the poet's final response to the urn, "that is all / Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know," is uttered in joy or in resignation, or in an inextricable mingling of the two, which, again, dost tease us out of thought.[64]

Polanyi points out how the prose rendering of Shakespeare's eighteenth sonnet, "Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?" reduces its content to a piece of callous self-adulation: "After some compliments to the beauty of his mistress, nearly half the sonnet is spent telling her that all her beauty will pass away. She is then suddenly reassured, most emphatically, that she will be an exception to this fate, only to be told next that this wonderful promise means only that the poet's genius will keep this sonnet—and herself—famous forever."[65] Polanyi's amplification deserves to be quoted in full:

> I have compared Shakespeare's eighteenth sonnet with the poet's telling his mistress, in ordinary conversation, "You are beautiful, but you will fade and die; however, your beauty will become immortal through my immortal verse." We can see now that the difference between them is twofold: (1) the poem is not the voice of the poet, and (2) its meaning is not conveyed by its prose content. For its meaning is formed by the integration of its formal pattern with that part of its

> content that can be expressed in prose. *But what its prose content expresses is incompatible with the artificial speech of a poem.* Nevertheless, we succeed in integrating these incompatibles—the artificial pattern and the prose content—and by doing this we produce a joint meaning which is the meaning the poem. *Logically* speaking, however, these parts of the poem would still be quite incompatible. In imaginatively attaining this meaning we are subsidiarily aware of its two components, which, viewed in themselves, are explicitly or logically incompatible but which, when combined by an artistic imagination, speak in one voice as the subsidiaries of the poem's meaning. This is how the grotesqueness of its prose content is dissolved in the lines of Shakespeare's sonnet [Emphasis of fourth sentence added].[66]

Further:

> This integration of parts in the meaning of a work of art is but an instance of the rule . . . that the integration of subsidiaries produces a perception differing in both appearance and content from its constituents.[67]

So also may we understand the *Ode*, as an artistic integration of logically and emotionally incompatible elements, fused in a perception that forever enriches the reader who can respond to the meaning of the poem as a work of art.

It may, of course, be too late, and this effort too little, to rescue the *Ode* from the shadow cast upon it by critics of high repute and by one hundred and sixty years of controversy. The very strenuousness of my effort to put the concluding couplet, and especially the Beauty-Truth motto, in place, so to speak, may be taken to justify the verdict that they constitute a "blemish," a "hole" in the poem.

I would argue, however, that the difficulty of the concluding lines reflects not on the poem but on the critics and their biases and preconceptions. I suggest, further, that Keats, with tremendous intelligence and control of his powers as a poet, launched on a slope of deepening meaning a profound insight, which in turn has helped to

prepare the way for the articulations which we now consider satisfactory in a much higher degree. Finally, I suggest that Keats's seminal insight was issued not as a philosophical statement "stuck onto" his poem, but rather as the fitting climax to one of the finest poems in the English language, a poem which perfectly exemplifies the enigmatic utterance of the urn.

1. Murry, John Middleton, *Keats* [4th edition, 1955], Minerva Press edition (1968), p. 210.
2. *Idem.*
3. *Idem.*
4. Quoted in Murry, *op. cit.,* p. 320.
5. *Ibid.,* p. 211.
6. Brooks, Cleanth, *The Well Wrought Urn*, Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc. (New York, 1975), pp. 153–154.
7. *Ibid.,* p. 165.
8. *Ibid.,* pp. 165–166.
9. Burnshaw, Stanley, *The Seamless Web*, George Braziller (New York, 1970), p. 295.
10. Bate, Walter Jackson, "The Ode on a Grecian Urn," in Shillinger, Jack, ed., *Twentieth Century Interpretations of Keats's Odes,* Prentice-Hall, Inc. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1968), p. 81, ftn. 3.
11. Wigod, Joseph, "Keats's Ideal in the *Ode on a Grecian Urn,"* in Shillinger, *op. cit.,* p. 63, ftn. 6.
12. Brooks, *op. cit.,* p. 292.
13. Barnard, John, *John Keats, The Complete Poems,* 2nd ed., Penguin Books (New York, 1977), p. 652.
14. Murry, *op. cit.,* p. 321.
15. Analogy: "In interpreting a will, construction of the will which leads to an unnatural or absurd result should be avoided." *Gangwisch Estate,* 454 Pa. 476, 480 (1973).
16. Barnard, *op. cit.,* p. 652.
17. Murry, *op. cit.,* p. 214.
18. *Ibid.,* p. 216.
19. *Ibid.,* p. 221.
20. *Ibid.,* p. 22.
21. *Ibid.,* p. 222.
22. *Idem.*
23. *Ibid.,* p. 226.
24. Brooks, *op. cit.,* p. 153.
25. *Ibid.,* p. 164.
26. Trilling, Lionel, *The Opposing Self,* The Viking Press (New York, 1955), p. 36.
27. *Idem.*
28. Murry, *op. cit.,* p. 217.

29. Cf. A.E. Housman, referring to his own poems:
    This is for all ill-treated fellows
      Unborn and unbegot
    For them to read when they're in trouble
      And I am not.
30. Trilling, *op. cit.,* p. 40.
31. Murry, *op. cit.,* p. 218.
32. Trilling, *op. cit.,* p. 41.
33. Brooks, *op. cit.,* p. 153. An analogy in the interpretation of statutes: "We do not inquire what the legislature meant; we ask only what the statute means." Oliver Wendell Holmes, "Theory of Legal Interpretation", 12 Harv. L. R. 417, 419 (1899).
34. Hospers, John, *Meaning and Truth in the Arts,* The University of North Carolina Press (Chapel Hall, 1946) pp. 154–155.
35. *Ibid.,* p.155.
36. *Ibid.,* p. 157.
37. *Ibid.,* p. 158.
38. *Ibid.,* Chapter 6.
39. *Ibid.,* p. 173.
40. *Ibid.,* p. 175.
41. Quoted in Hospers, *op. cit.,* p. 176.
42. Hospers, *op. cit.,* p. 194.
43. *Ibid.,* p. 194.
44. Polanyi, Michael, and Harry Prosch, *Meaning,* The University of Chicago Press (Chicago and London, 1975), p. 79.
45. *Idem.*
46. Jaynes, Julian, *The Origins of Consciousness in The Breakdown of the Bicameral Mind*, Houghton Mifflin Company (Boston, 1976), p. 52.
47. *Ibid.,* pp. 48–49.
48. *Ibid.,* pp. 49–50.
49. Cantor, Gilbert M., "Art in Science, Science in Art," *The Barnes Foundation Journal of the Art Department,* Vol. VII, No. 2, The Barnes Foundation Press, Merion, Pa., Autumn 1976, p. 55.
50. Barnes, Albert C. and Violette deMazia, *The Art of Renoir,* The Barnes Foundation Press, Merion, Pa., p. 32.
51. Actually, the poet says: "That is all ye know *on earth* . . ." I take "on earth" to be merely an emphatic expression, as when we say, "Where on earth did you get that hat?" or "What in the world are you doing?" The phrase also satisfies the requirements of the pentameter. The view has been expressed, however, that " 'on earth' works havoc by insinuating another place or state where the beauty-truth formula might not suffice." Further: "The relation between Beauty and Truth was widely discussed in the Eighteenth Century, not least in Germany. The topic forms the central part of the argument in Schiller's long poem *Die Kunstler* of 1789, in which he asserts that man *on earth* cannot apprehend truth except in its sensuous form, that is in the shape of beauty. In the beyond, as disembodied spirits, we shall be able to behold the goddess of Truth Urania with her crown of fire, while on earth she appears to us as the goddess of Beauty Cypria, wearing her girdle of charm. The gist of this portion of Schiller's poem is contained in the lines:

Was wir als Schonheit hier empfinden
Wird einst als Wahrheit uns entgegen gehn."

(My shaky translation: "What we as Beauty here perceive / Will hence as Truth confront us!")

Jones, John, *John Keats's Dream of Truth,* Barnes & Noble, Inc. (New York, 1969), pp. 85, 295.

52. In Shelley's "Ozymandias," the monument described was specifically commemorative in its intent, but the only truth that remains is that embodied in the sculptor's art:

. . . on the sand,
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown
And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things . . . .

53. As previously noted, certain editors and critics have adopted a punctuation which makes the urn speak the concluding couplet in its entirety. Talbot, for example, accepts such a version, but he also cites Teich's study of this issue, which points out that "no one punctuation of the lines can be considered definitive." Talbot, Norman, *The Major Poems of John Keats,* Sydney University (Australia, 1968), pp. 66, 96. Although I have not addressed myself specifically in the preceding text to this version of the poem, which conforms to Barnard's option 1 (page 79 above), the last two lines, as the urn's message, would have essentially the same meaning that they have when read as the dialogue of urn and poet, but the poet's response in the dialogic version provides a touch of irony and a certain dramatic ambivalence which otherwise drops out.

54. We are also grateful to Brooks for the lesson that Keats's was not the first urn to bear a message on Truth and Beauty, though his message is the one that has stuck most often in the critic's craw. Keats was an avid reader of Shakespeare, one of whose poems concludes:

Beautie, Truth, and Raritie,
Grace in all simplicitie,
Here enclosed, in cinders lie.

Death is not the Phoenix nest,
And the Turtles loyall brest,
To eternitie does rest. . . .

Truth may seeme, but cannot be
Beauty bragge, but tis not she,
Truth and Beautie buried be.

To this urne let those repaire,
That are either true or faire,
For these dead Birds, sigh a prayer.

Brooks, *op. cit.,* p. 20.

55. Talbot, *op. cit.,* p. 97.

56. "We hate poetry," Keats wrote, "that has a palpable design upon us—and if we do not agree, seems to put its hand in its breeches pocket." (Quoted in Inglis, Fred, *Keats*, Arco Publishing Company, Inc. [New York, 1969], p. 67.)

If the concluding couplet of the "Urn" were intended as Keats's utterance of a propositional truth, truly (and uncharacteristically) his own precept would be violated by the poet.

57. Cf. Jones, *op. cit.,* p. 220.
58. See, for example, Jones, *op. cit.,* p. 223; Talbot, *op. cit.,* pp. 62–66; Dickstein, Morris, *Keats and His Poetry*, The University of Chicago Press (Chicago and London, 1971), pp. 221–228; and Mayhead, Robin, *John Keats*, The University Press (Cambridge, 1967), pp. 83–84.
59. Mayhead, *op. cit.,* p. 83. Cf. Jones, *op. cit.,* pp. 223–224.
60. Mayhead, *op. cit.,* p. 84.
61. *Ibid.,* p. 85.
62. *Ibid.,* p. 86.
63. Jones, *op. cit.,* p. 224.
64. This is compatible with Keats's famous concept of Negative Capability: ". . . That is when man is capable of being in uncertainties, Mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact and reason"—quoted in Trilling, *op. cit.,* p. 32.
65. Polanyi, *op. cit.,* p. 81.
66. *Ibid.,* p. 86.
67. *Ibid.,* p. 87.

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REMARKS ON PLATE 1

For a convincing objectification of the point made in the text (page 18 ftn) concerning transferred values in the photograph reproduced on Plate 1, it is unfortunate that, in the black-and-white reproduction, these transferred values are far from being clearly effective or even correctly represented, as they happen to be in the color photograph by Condax. In the original photographic print, the figure's dress is of a saturated midnight blue; her hair, punctuated by a small red flower near her right temple, is of a golden brown, and her complexion tends towards a warm pink-ivory; the setting surrounding the figure, including the column at the left, is predominately in tones of tan and gray, save for the near-black African motif on the wall to the right of the figure's head. And the total colorful scene is enlivened and lightened with a gently dramatic pattern of vari-sized and vari-shaped units in pure white—the "snow flakes," "shreds of lace" and "moonbeams" which float freely in mid-air in the three-dimensional space in front of (seen on Plate 1 in the areas of the shoulder-and-arm at the right and of the column at the left), as well as level with, and further back than, where the figure and column stand.

PLATE 1

John Condax

A Portrait Photograph
(Copyright: John Condax)—Page 18 ftn
(See remarks on opposite page)

PLATE 2

Cézanne

Provence Woman
—Pages 6, 9

PLATE 3

Gauguin

À Mr Loulou—Souvenir
—Pages 20,44

PLATE 4

Renoir

Promenade
—Pages 19 ftn, 22 ftn

PLATE 5

Manet

The Wash
—Page 19 ftn

PLATE 6

Soutine

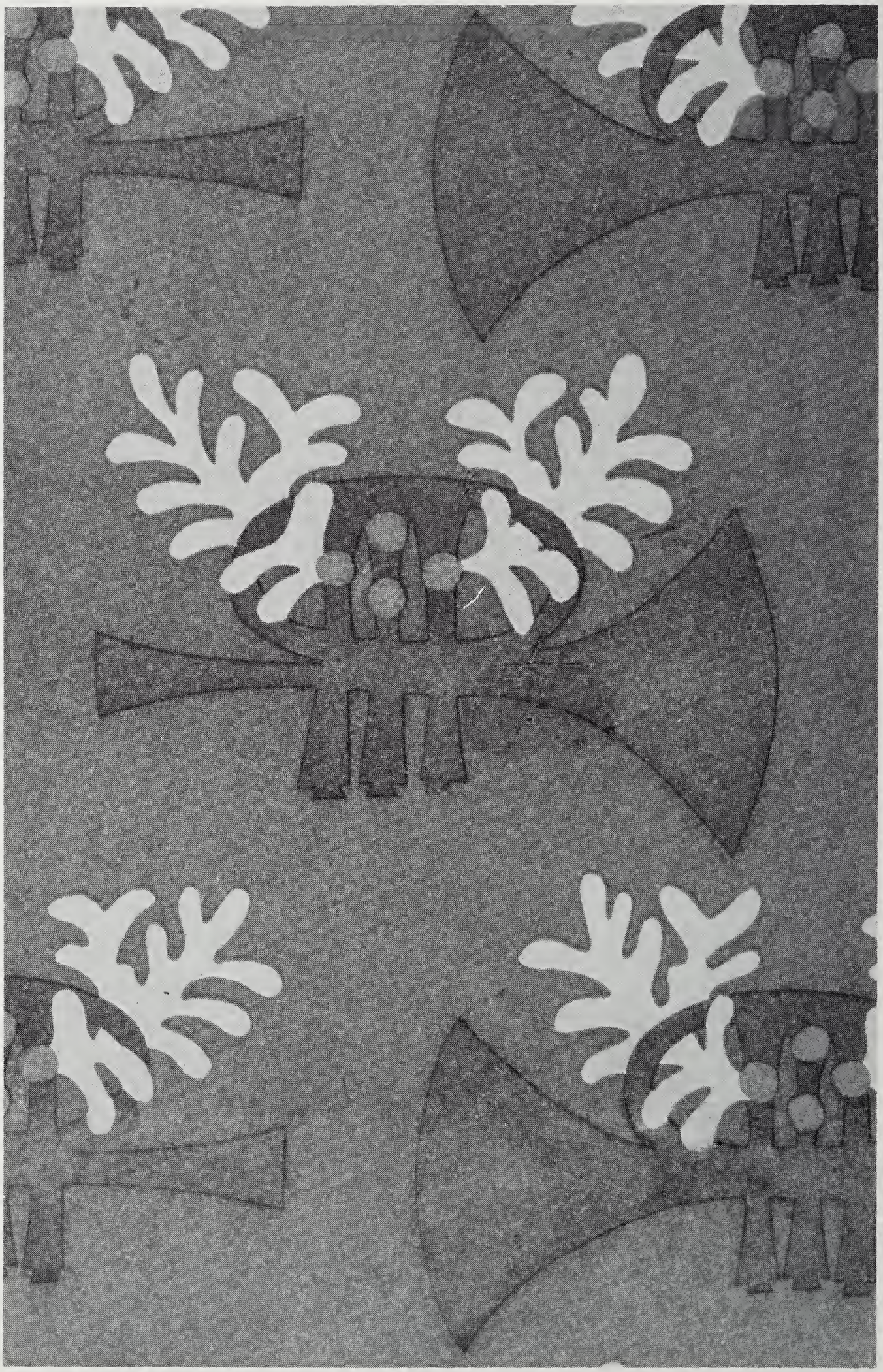
Gourdon

—Pages 3–4, 9, 10, 17–19, 18 ftn, 21–23, 23 ftn

PLATE 7

Hester Cunningham

Still Life (Fabric)
(Privately owned)—Page 21



Modern

Wrapping Paper
(Privately owned)—Page 21

Matisse

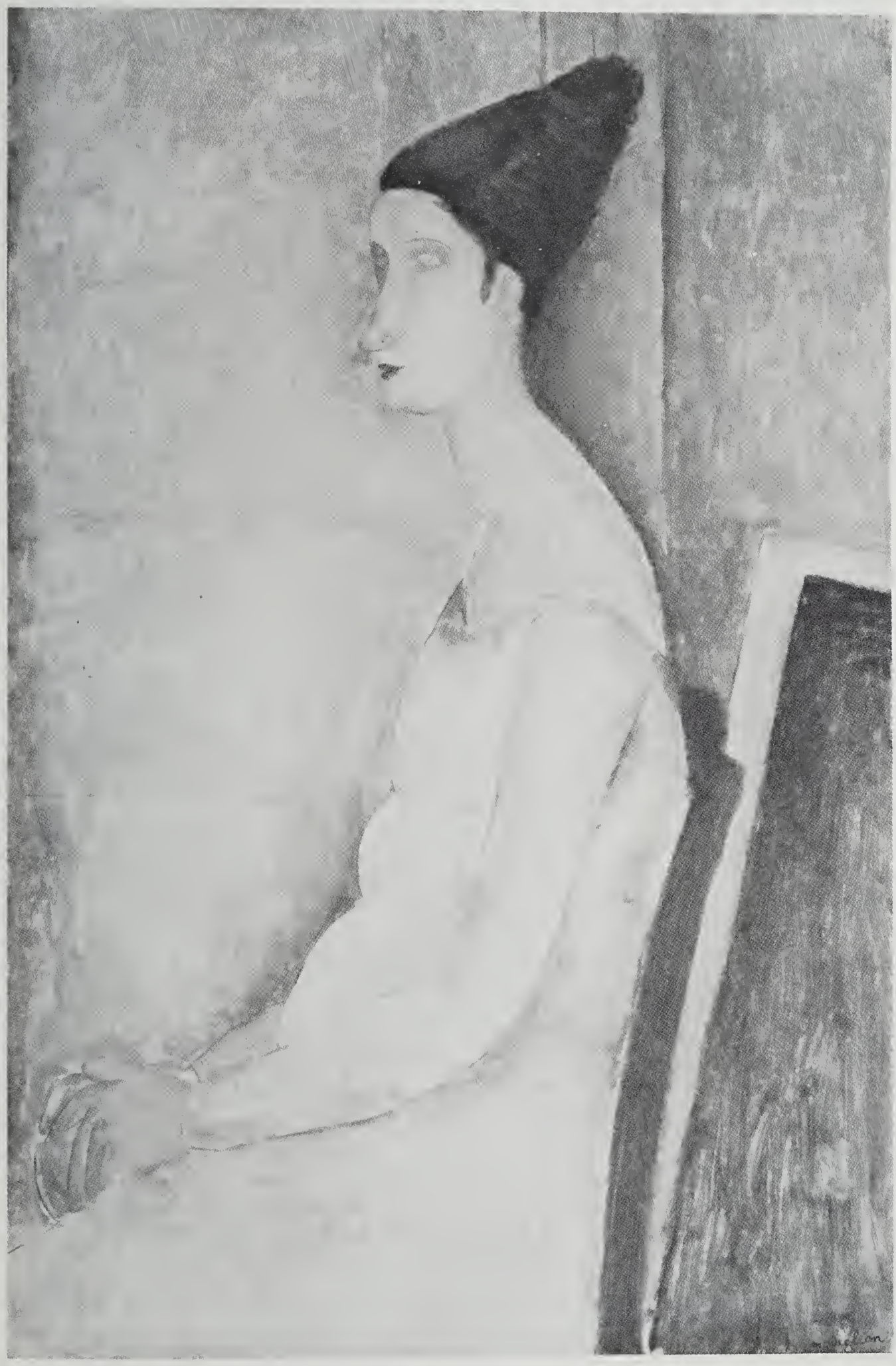
Mimosa
(Rug designed by Matisse—Present ownership unknown)—Page 21

PLATE 10

Manet

Woman Walking in the Garden (Study for "Annabelle Lee")
—Page 23 ftn

PLATE 11



Modigliani

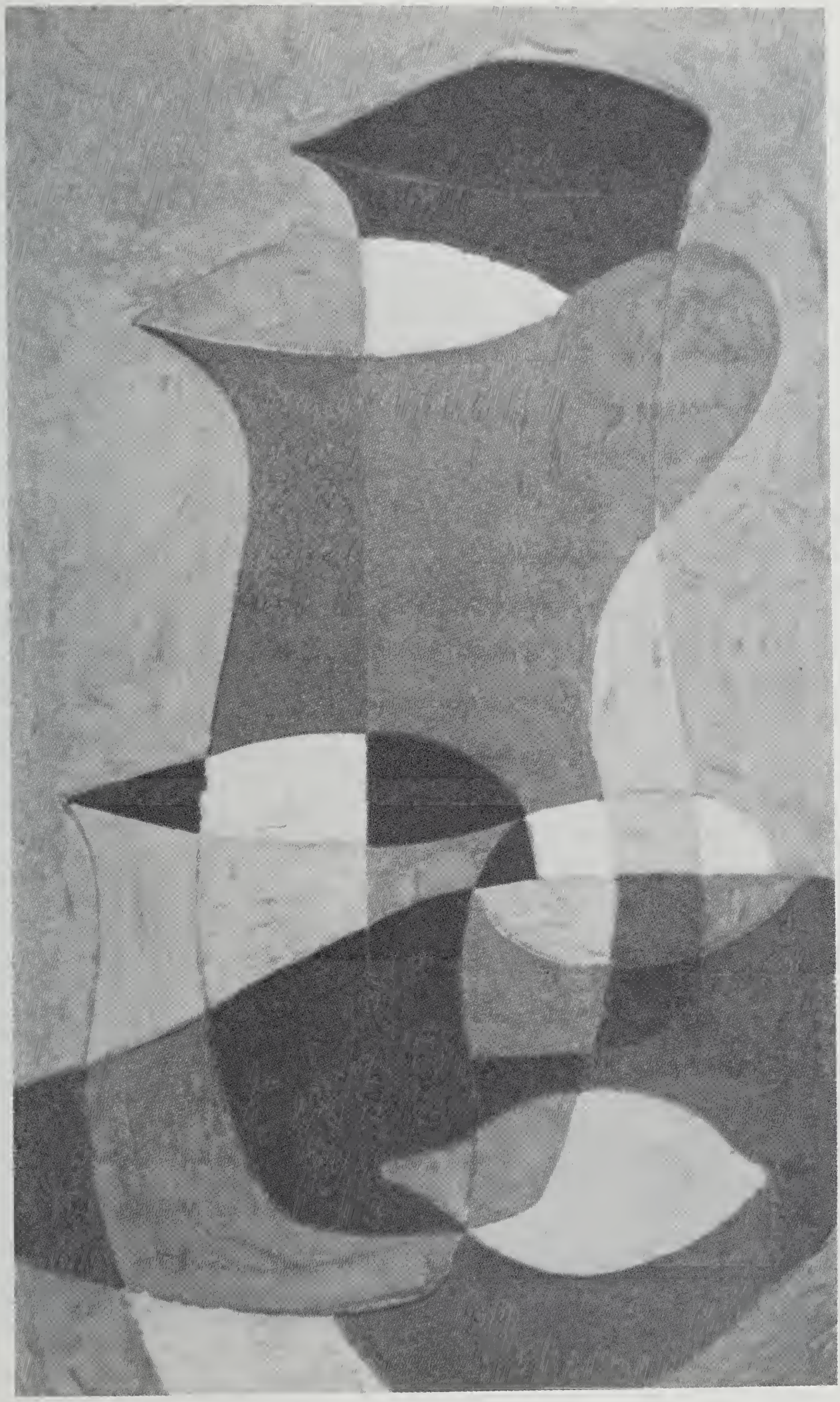
Haricot Rouge
—Page 6

PLATE 12

Modern

Wall covering
(Privately owned)—Page 21

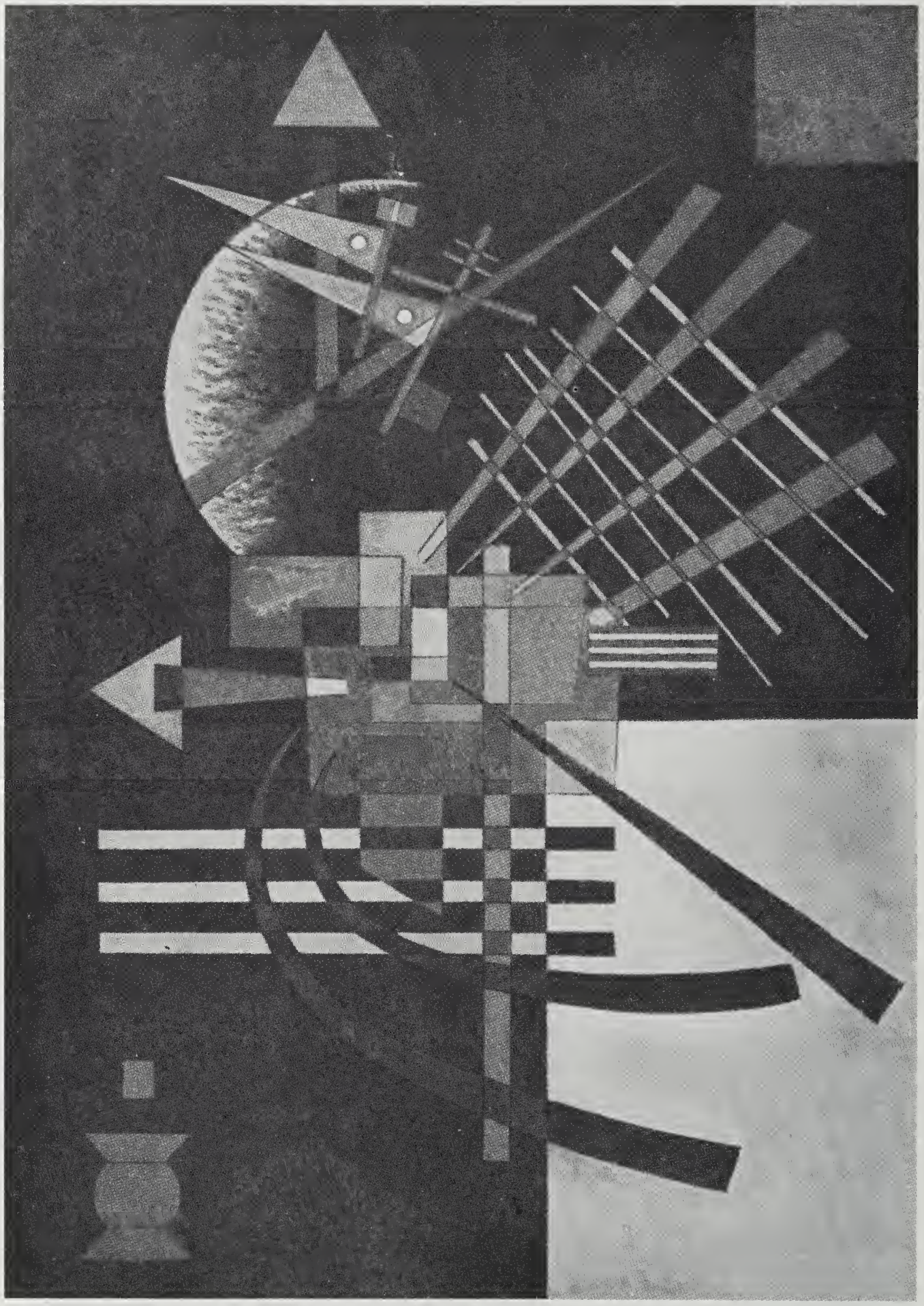
PLATE 13



Levedag

Still Life
(Present ownership unknown)—Page 34 ftn

PLATE 14



Kandinsky

Above and Left
(Present ownership unknown)—Page 34 ftn

PLATE 15

Botticelli *The Virgin and Child, with St. John*
(The Barber Institute of Fine Arts, University of Birmingham)—Page 22 ftn

PLATE 16

Picasso

The Girls of Avignon
(Collection: The Museum of Modern Art, New York
—Acquired through the Lillie P. Bliss Bequest)—Page 19 ftn

PLATE 17

Miró

Woman and Birds (Tapestry designed by Miró)
—Page 34 ftn

PLATE 18

Matisse

Two Women in Interior (Blue and Yellow Garden)
—Pages 35–36 ftn

PLATE 19

Matisse

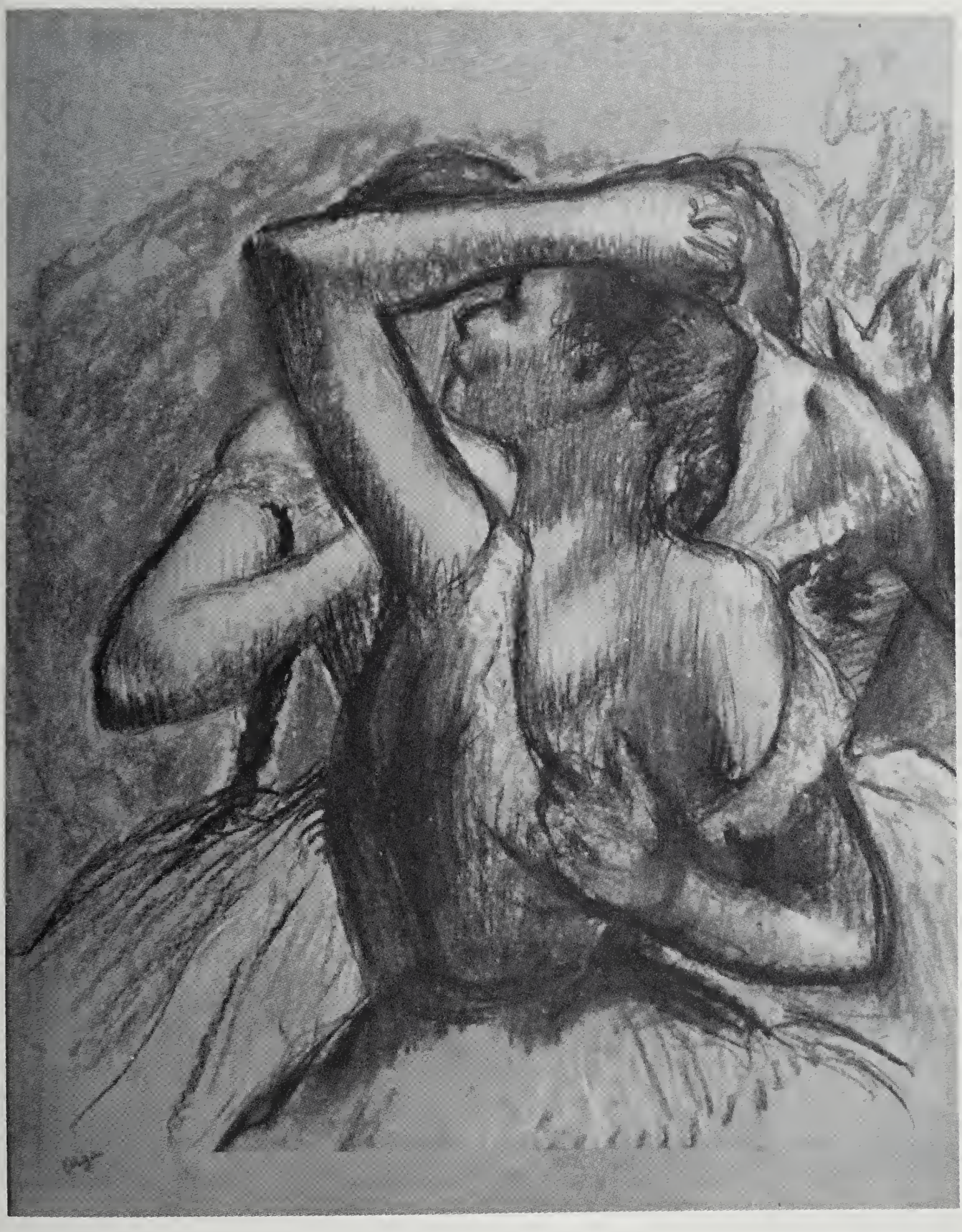
Two Women in Interior (Red and Yellow Setting)
—Pages 35–36 ftn

PLATE 20

Courbet

Woman with Doves
—Page 38

PLATE 21



Degas

Three Ballet Girls
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PLATE 22

Vincent van Gogh

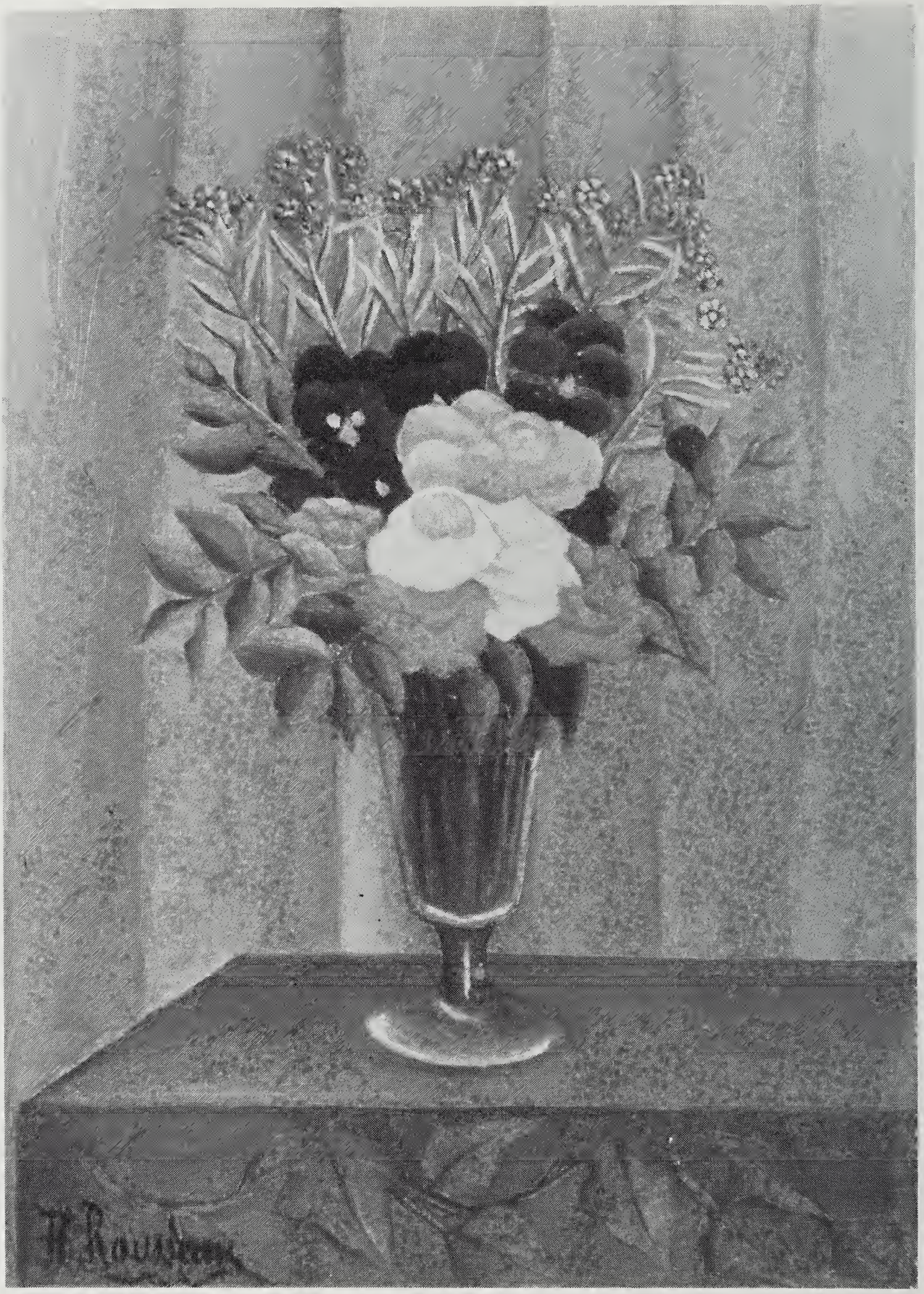
Flowerpiece
—Pages 20, 29 ftn, 33, 34, 37 ftn

PLATE 23

Soutine

Flowerpiece
—Page 29 ftn

PLATE 24



Henri Rousseau

Flowerpiece
—Page 29 ftn

PLATE 25

Renoir

Anemones
—Page 29 ftn

PLATE 26

Yoshi Chika

Standing Figure (Woodcut print)
—Page 20

PLATE 27

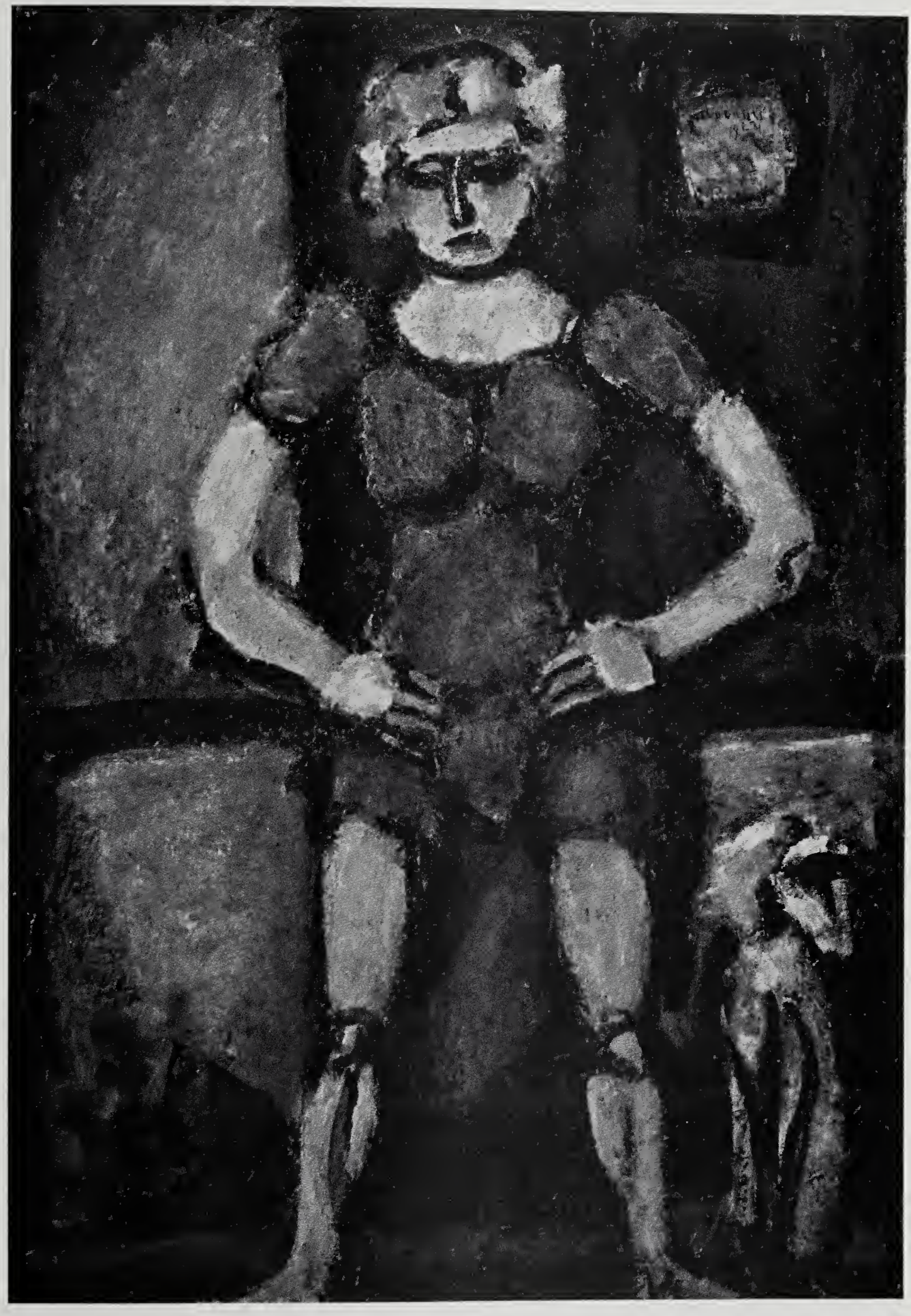
Toyokuni

Woman and Lanterns (Woodcut print)
—Pages 20, 43–44

Gothic

Zozime and a Lion Bury Ste-Marie, the Egyptian (Stained glass) (Bourges Cathedral)—Page 41

PLATE 29



Rouault

Clown and Dog
—Pages 7–8

PLATE 30

Adolphe Bouguereau

Mother and Child
(Courtesy of the Virginia Museum)—Page 19 ftn

PLATE 31

Tintoretto

Hercules and Antaeus
(Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford.
The Ella Gallup Sumner and Mary Catlin
Sumner Collection)—Page 44

PLATE 32

Tintoretto

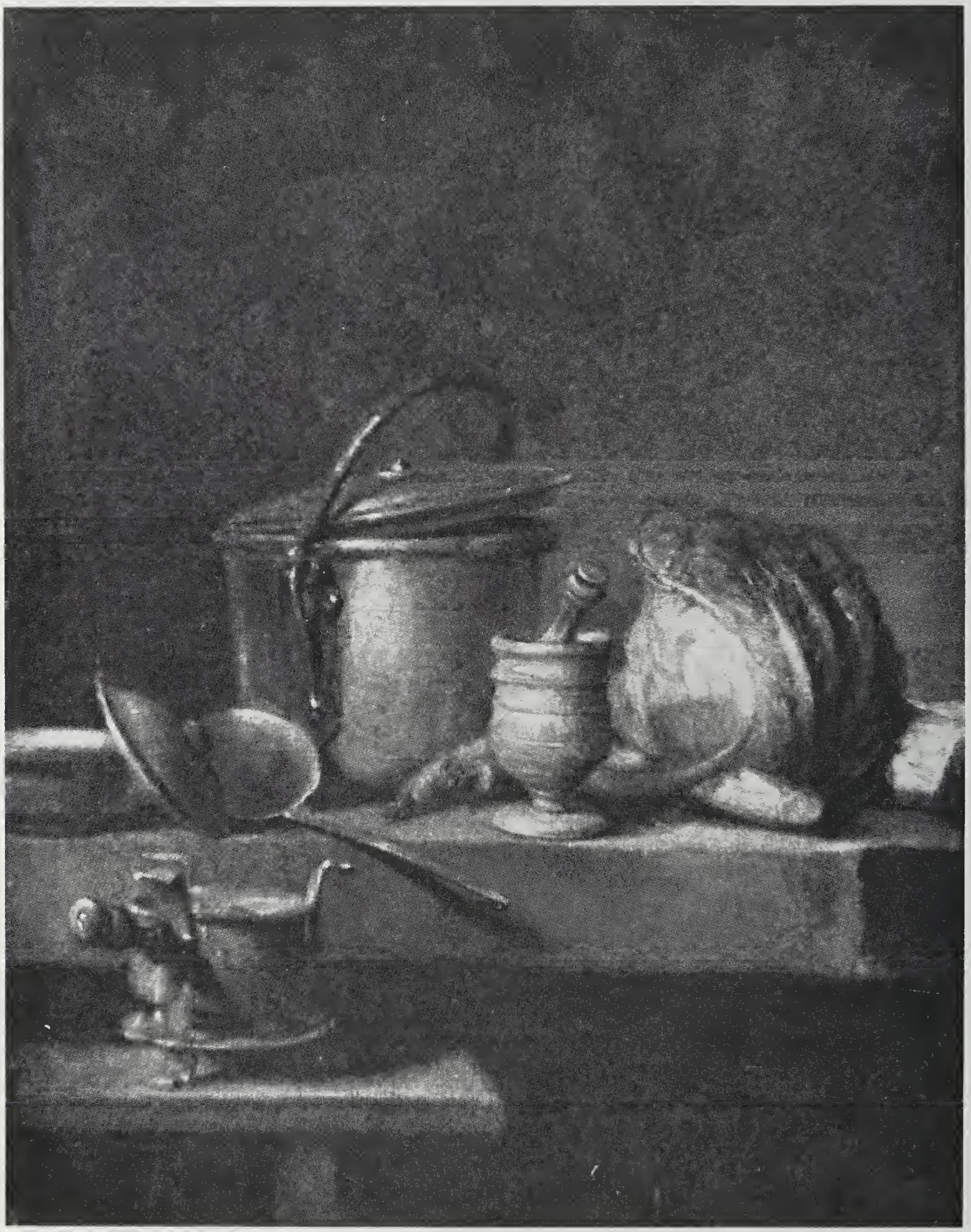
Two Prophets
—Pages 22–23, 23 ftn, 28, 43

PLATE 33

Unknown *Santero* (New Mexico)

Madonna in Prayer
—Pages 32–33, 34

PLATE 34



Chardin

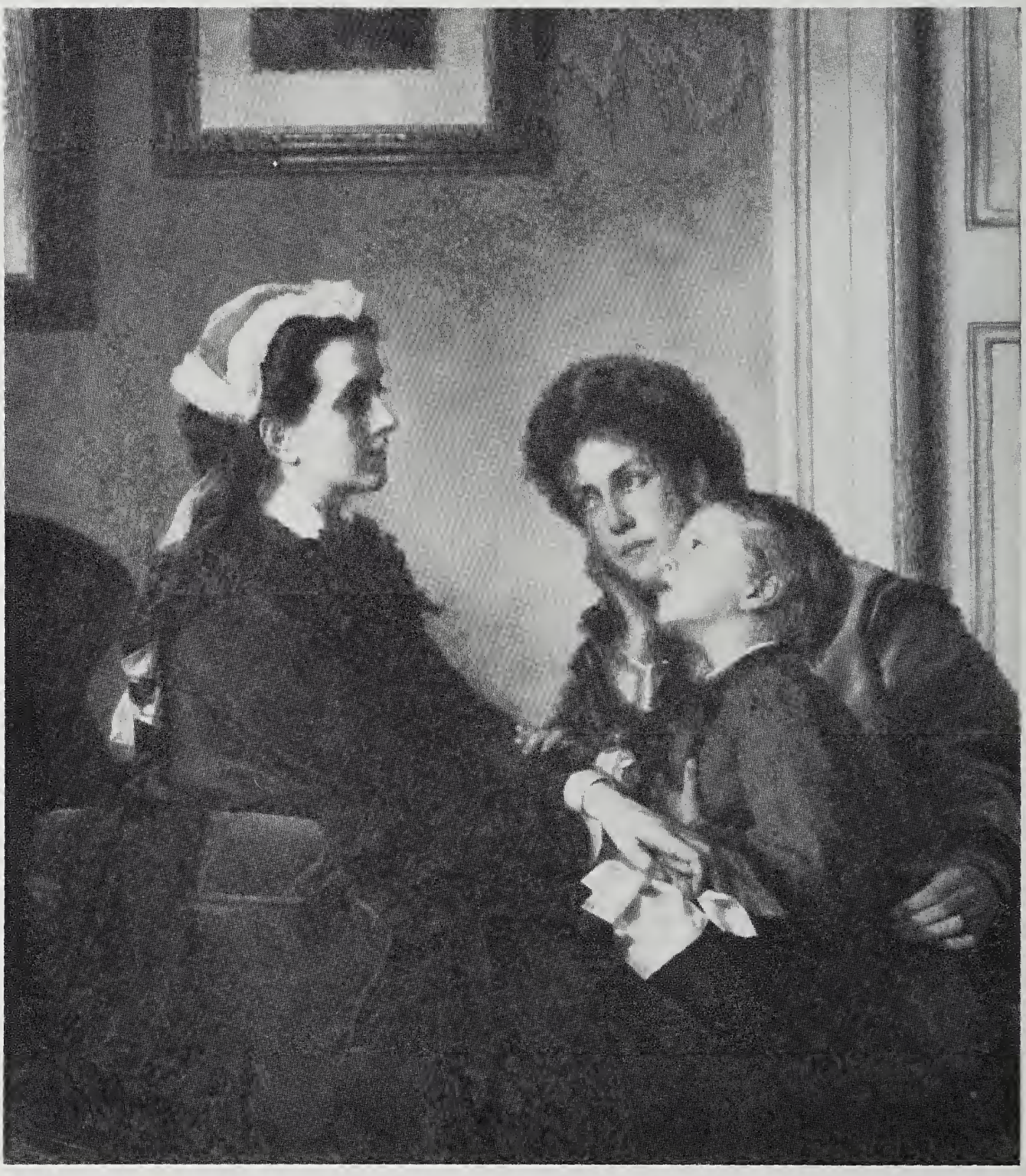
Still Life with Cabbage
—Pages 22–23, 24, 43

PLATE 35

El Greco

The Holy Family
(The Cleveland Museum of Art.
Gift of The Friends of The Cleveland
Museum of Art in memory of J. H. Wade)—Pages 23 ftn, 44

PLATE 36



Alexandre Cabanel

The Governess
(Philadelphia Museum of Art: Purchased Edward and Althea Budd Fund)—Page 19 ftn

PLATE 37

Jacob van Ruisdael

View of Haarlem
(Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam)—Pages 66, 68

PLATE 38

Luigi Settanni

Ballet
—Page 38

PLATE 39

Vincent van Gogh

Thatches in the Sunshine (Reminiscence of the North)
—Page 70

PLATE 40

Gabriel Metsu

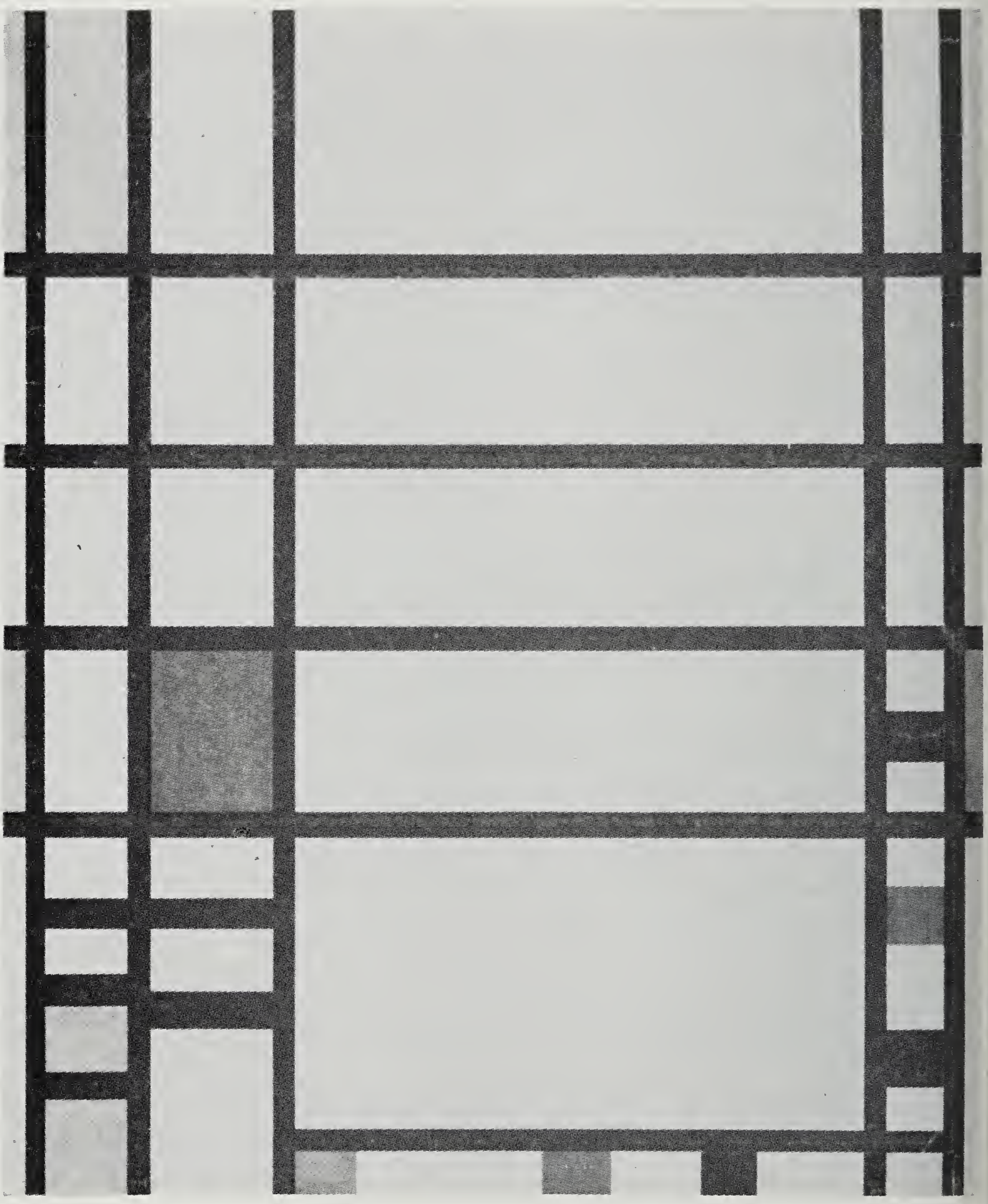
The Sick Child
(Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam)—Page 70

PLATE 41

Jan Vermeer

The Little Street
(Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam)—Page 70

PLATE 42



Piet Mondrian

Trafalgar Square (1939–1943)
(Oil on canvas 57¼ x 47¼″—Collection: The Museum of Modern Art, New York—Gift of William A. M. Burden)—Page 70

PLATE 43

Gerrit Rietveld

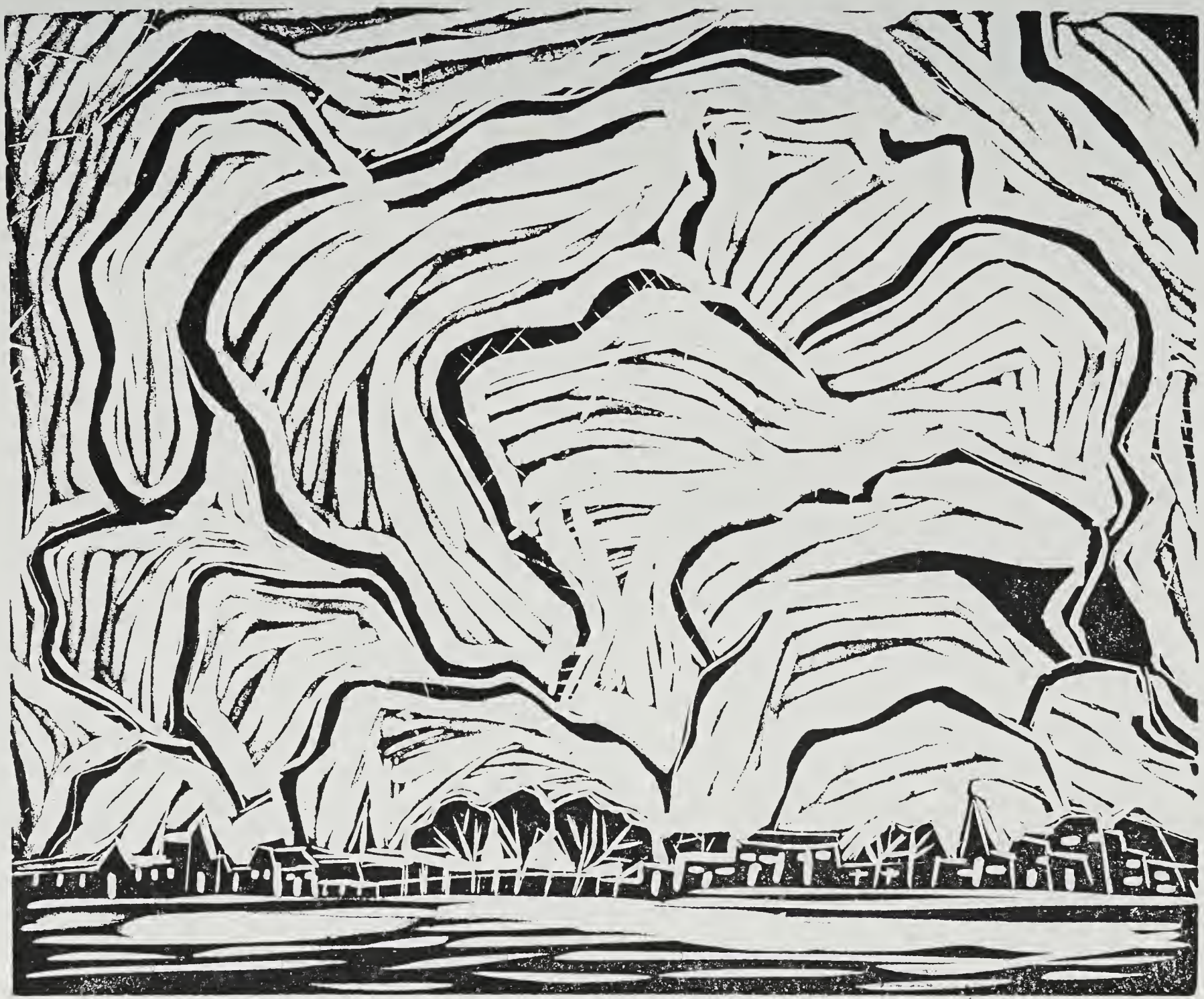
Red and Blue Armchair
(Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam)—Page 70

Emanuel de Witte

Interior with Woman Playing the Harpsichord
(State-owned Art Collections Department, The Hague)—Pages 65–66, 70

Pieter de Hooch

The Linen Cupboard
(Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam)—Pages 43, 65, 70



Navâh

Dutch Landscape
(Privately owned)—Page 68

Jacob van Ruisdael

Wheatfields

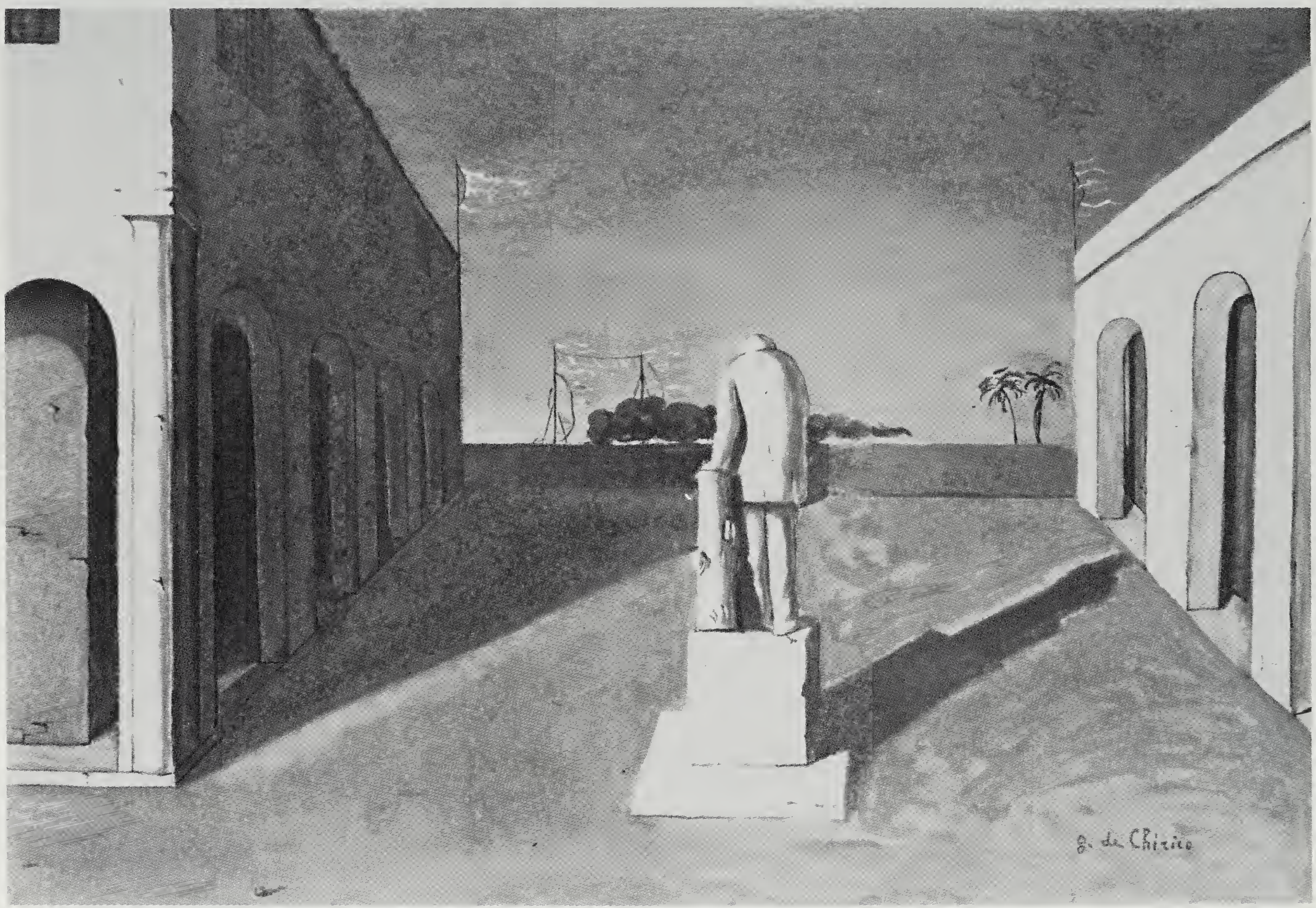
(The Metropolitan Museum of Art
—Bequest of Benjamin Altman, 1913)—Page 68

Rembrandt

The Stone Bridge
(Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam)—Page 69

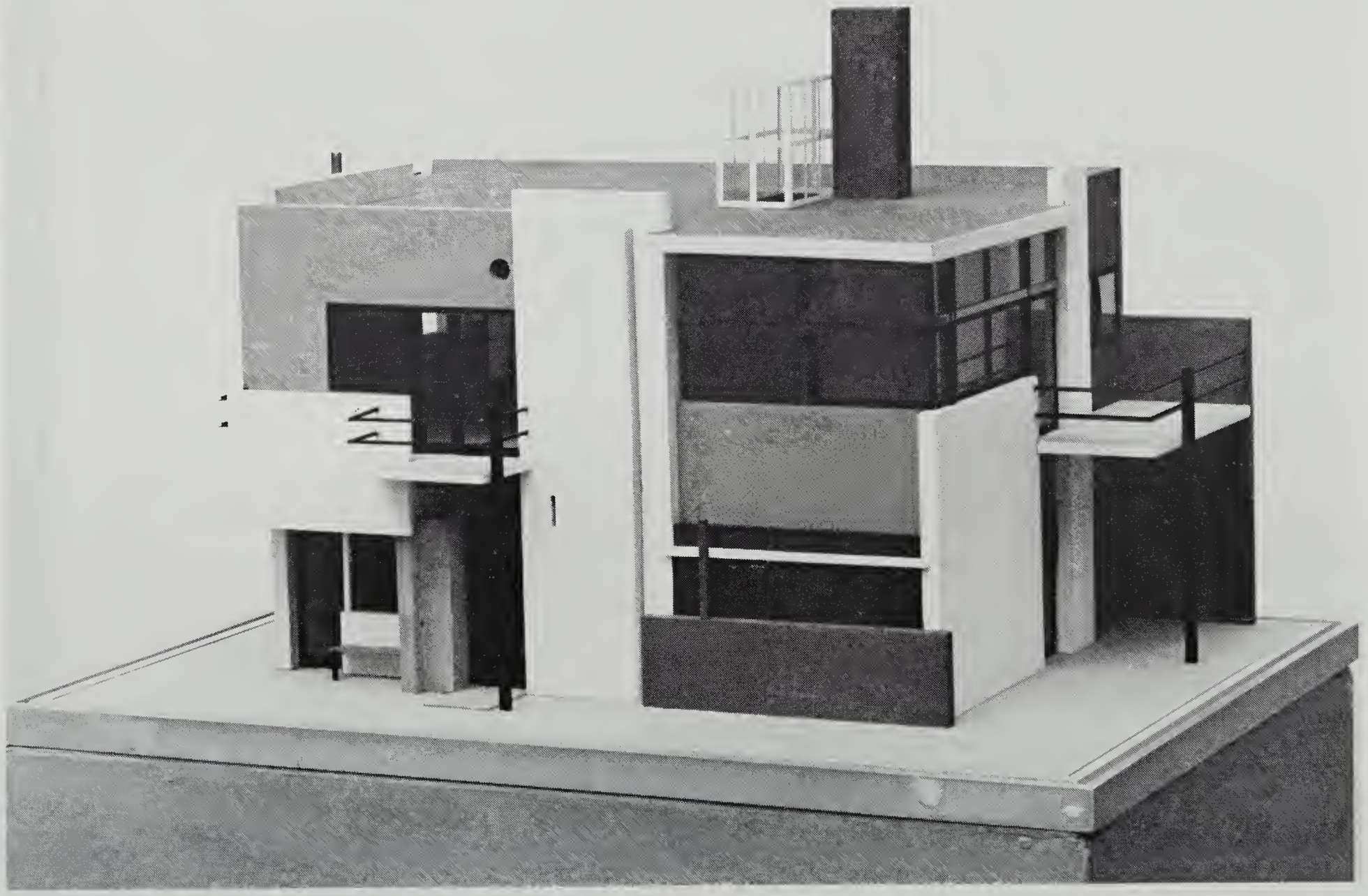
Rembrandt

The Jewish Bride
(Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam)—Pages 69, 69 ftn



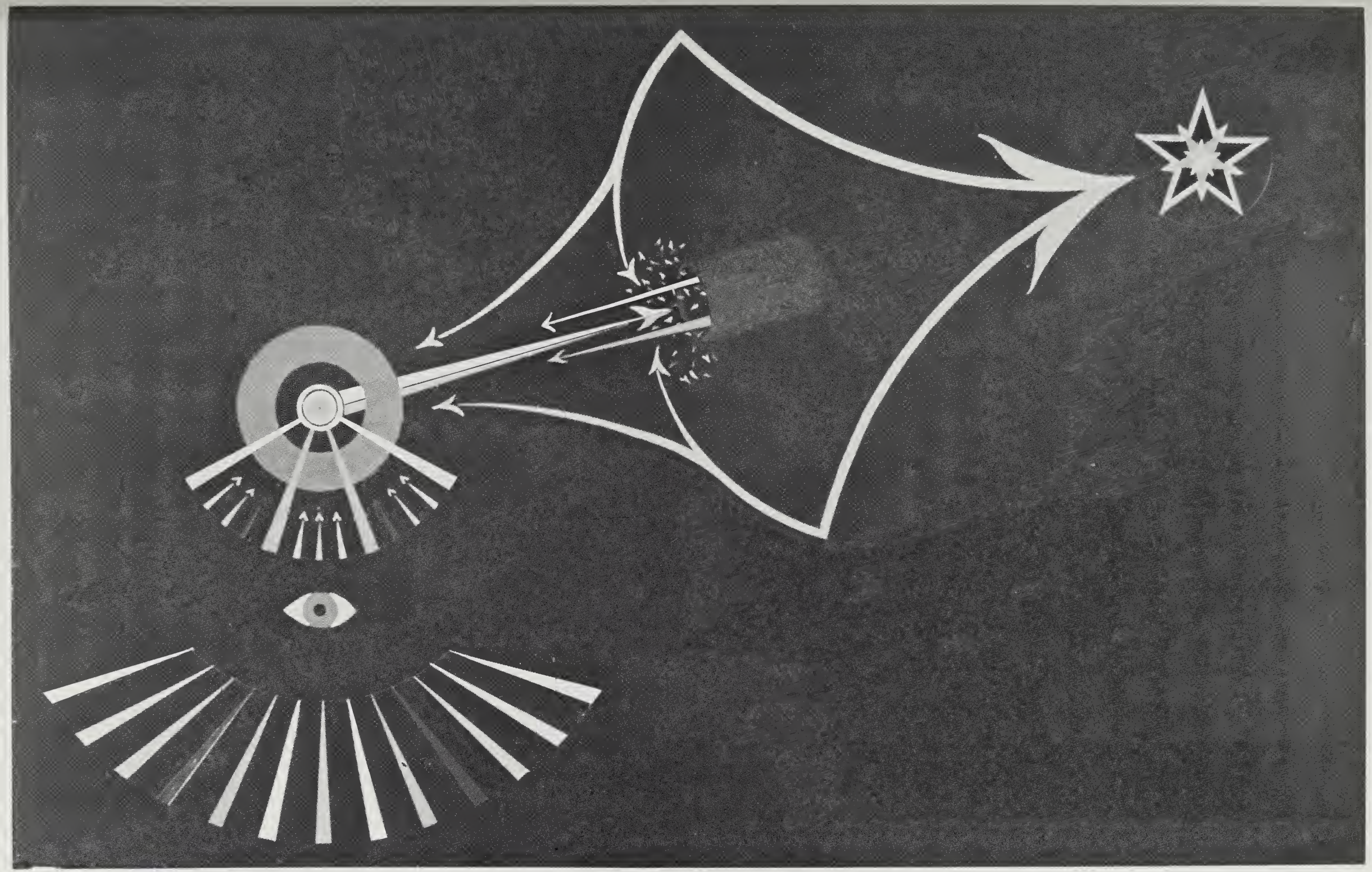
Giorgio de Chirico

Plaza
—Page 22 ftn



Gerrit Rietveld

Maquette for the Schröder House in Utrecht
(Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam)—Page 70



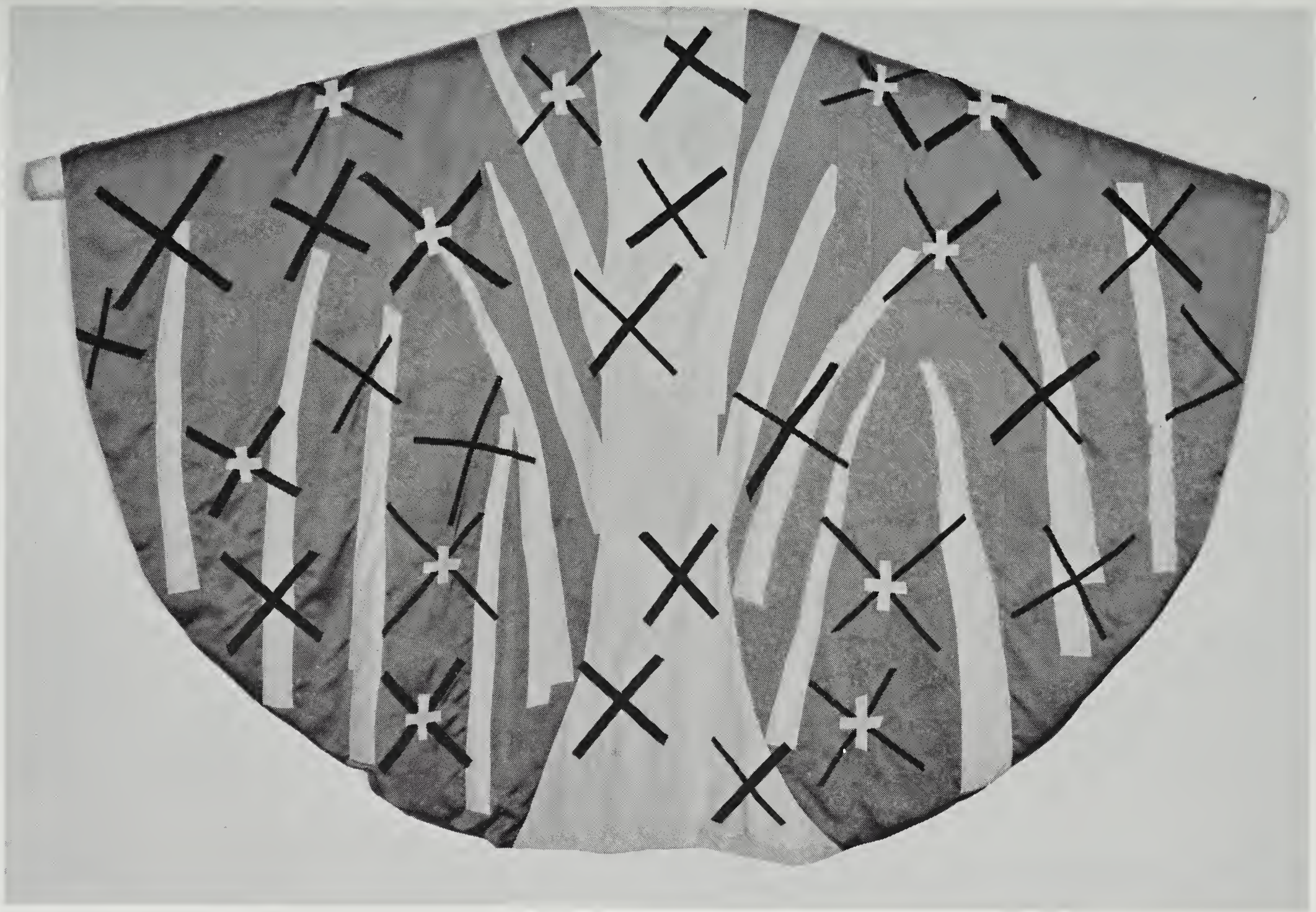
Diagram

Perception
—Page 47

PLATE 53

Picasso

Guernica
(On extended loan to the Museum of Modern Art, New York, from the estate of the artist)—Page 14 ftn



Matisse

Chasuble (front) (designed by Matisse)
(Collection: The Museum of Modern Art, New York
—Gift of Mrs. Charles Suydam Cutting)—Page 21

PLATE 55

Raoul Dufy

Deauville Harbor
—Page 23 ftn

Camille Pissarro

Garden
—Page 44

Sisley

River Scene with Ducks
—Page 28

Seurat

Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte
(Collection of The Art Institute of Chicago)—Page 22 ftn

Perugino

The Handing Over of the Keys to St. Peter
(Courtesy of the Vatican Museums)—Page 22 ftn

Claude le Lorrain

Landscape
—Page 22 ftn

Henri Rousseau

People in Sunday Clothes
—Page 22 ftn

Prehistoric

Yellow Horse and Flying Arrows (Wall Painting—Lascaux)
(Photograph: Musée de l'Homme, Paris)—Page 23 ftn

Degas

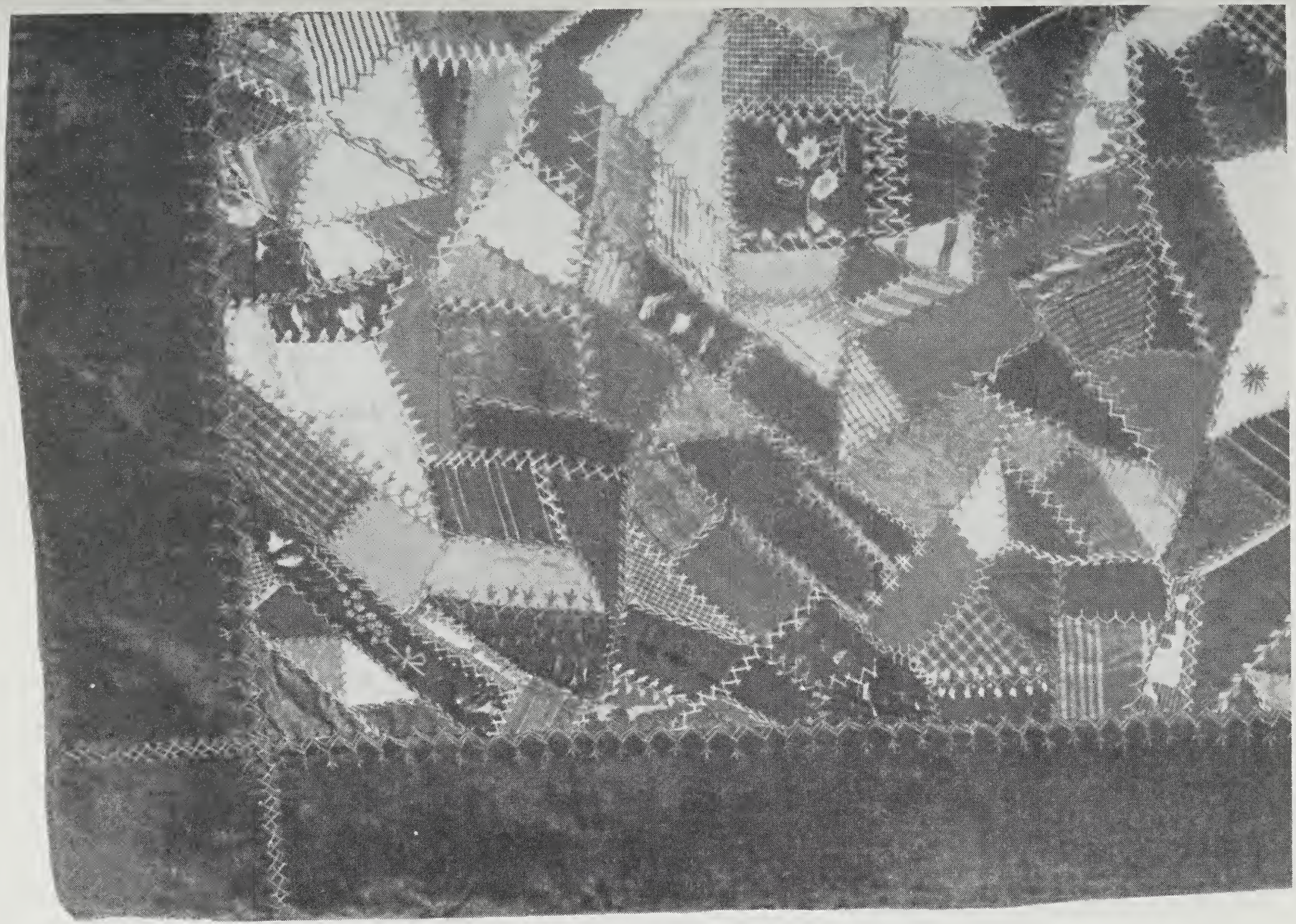
Jockeys and Race Horses
—Page 22 ftn

Vincent van Gogh

Tavern Scene
—Pages 20, 44

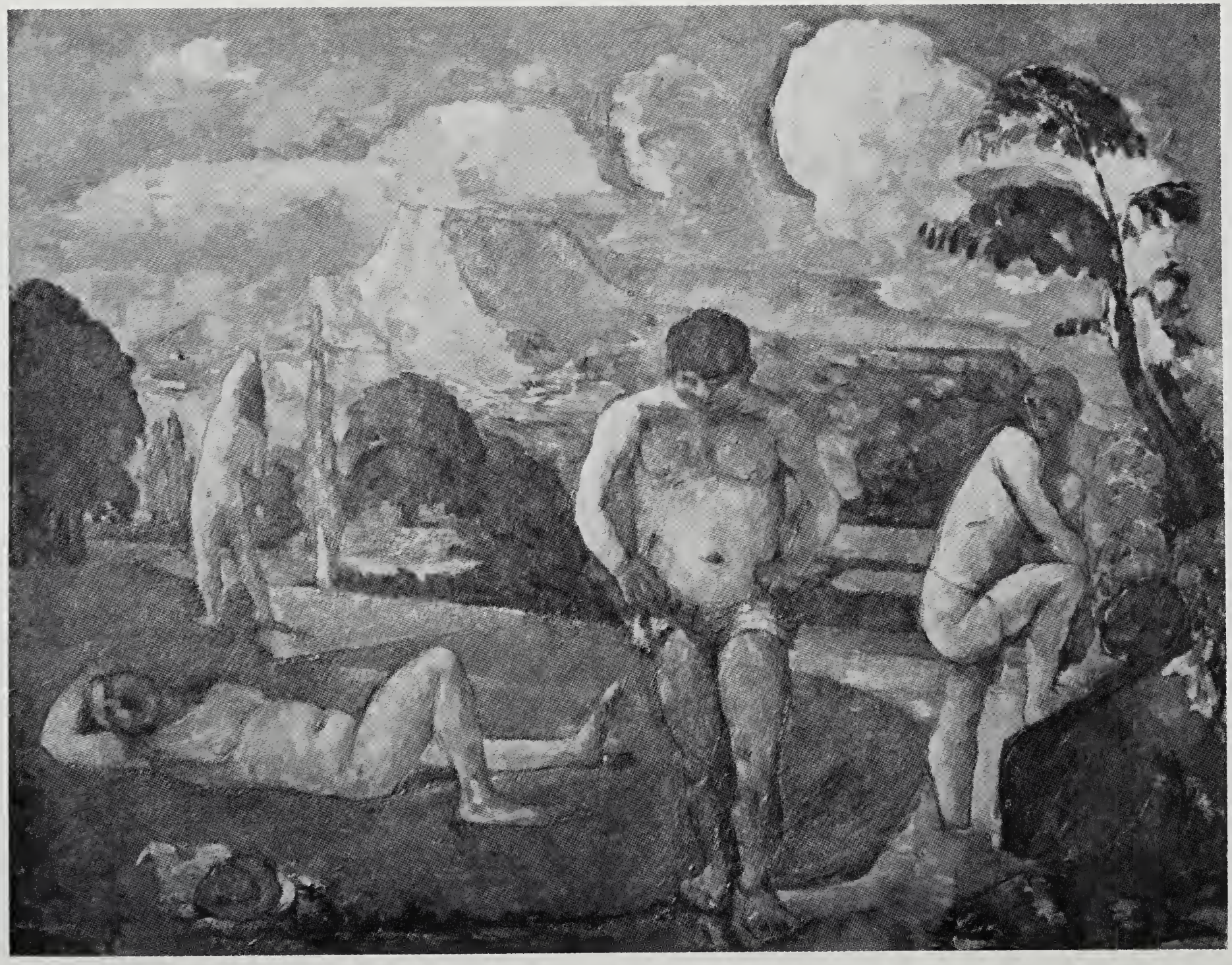
Gauguin

The Day of God



American

Patchwork Quilt (fragment)
(Privately owned)—Page 42



Cézanne

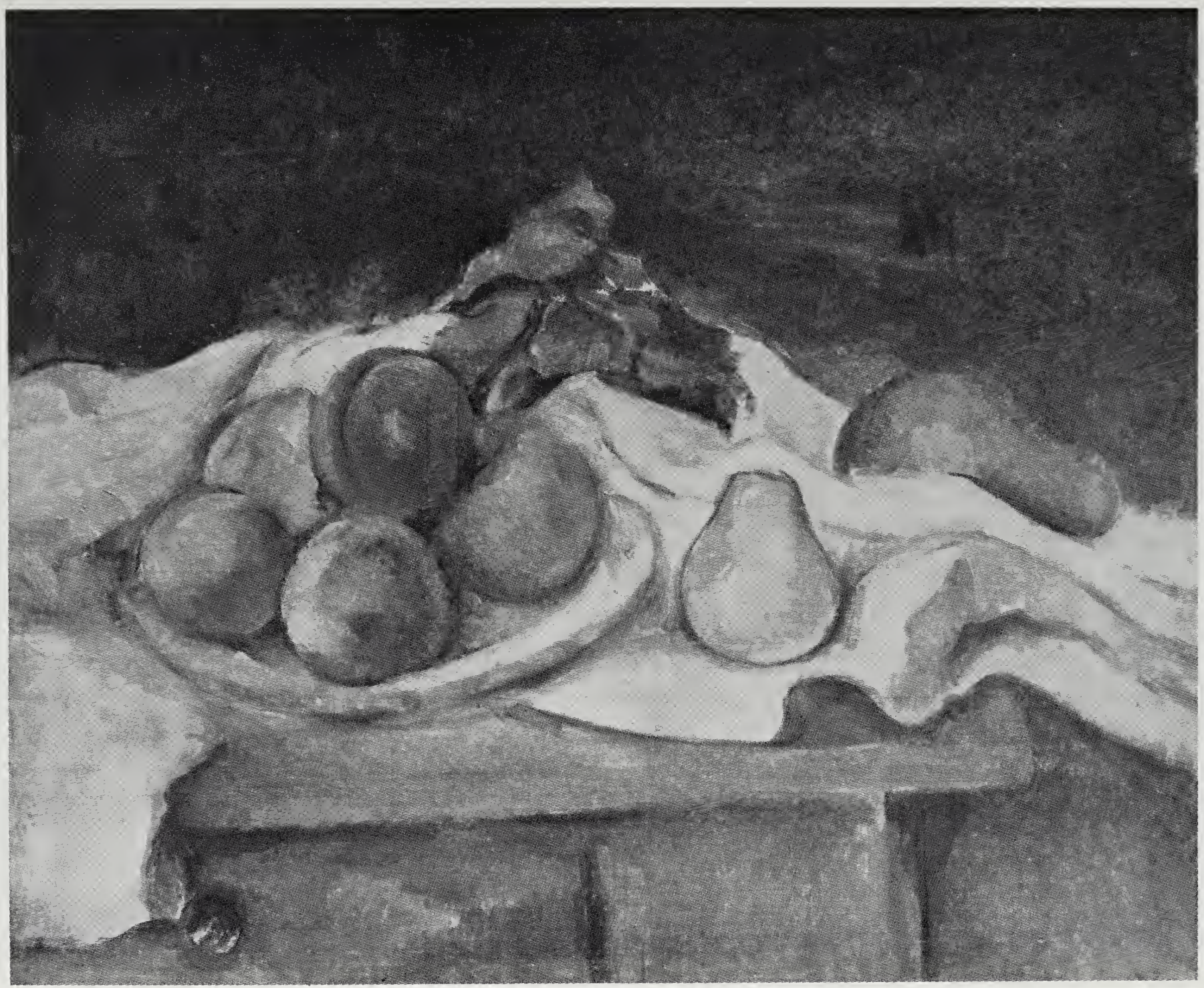
Bathers at Rest
—Page 29 ftn

Manet

Fruit on Table
(Louvre-Jeu de Paume—Photograph: Musées Nationaux, Paris)—Page 44

Cézanne

Nudes in Landscape
—Pages 19 ftn, 30, 44



Cézanne

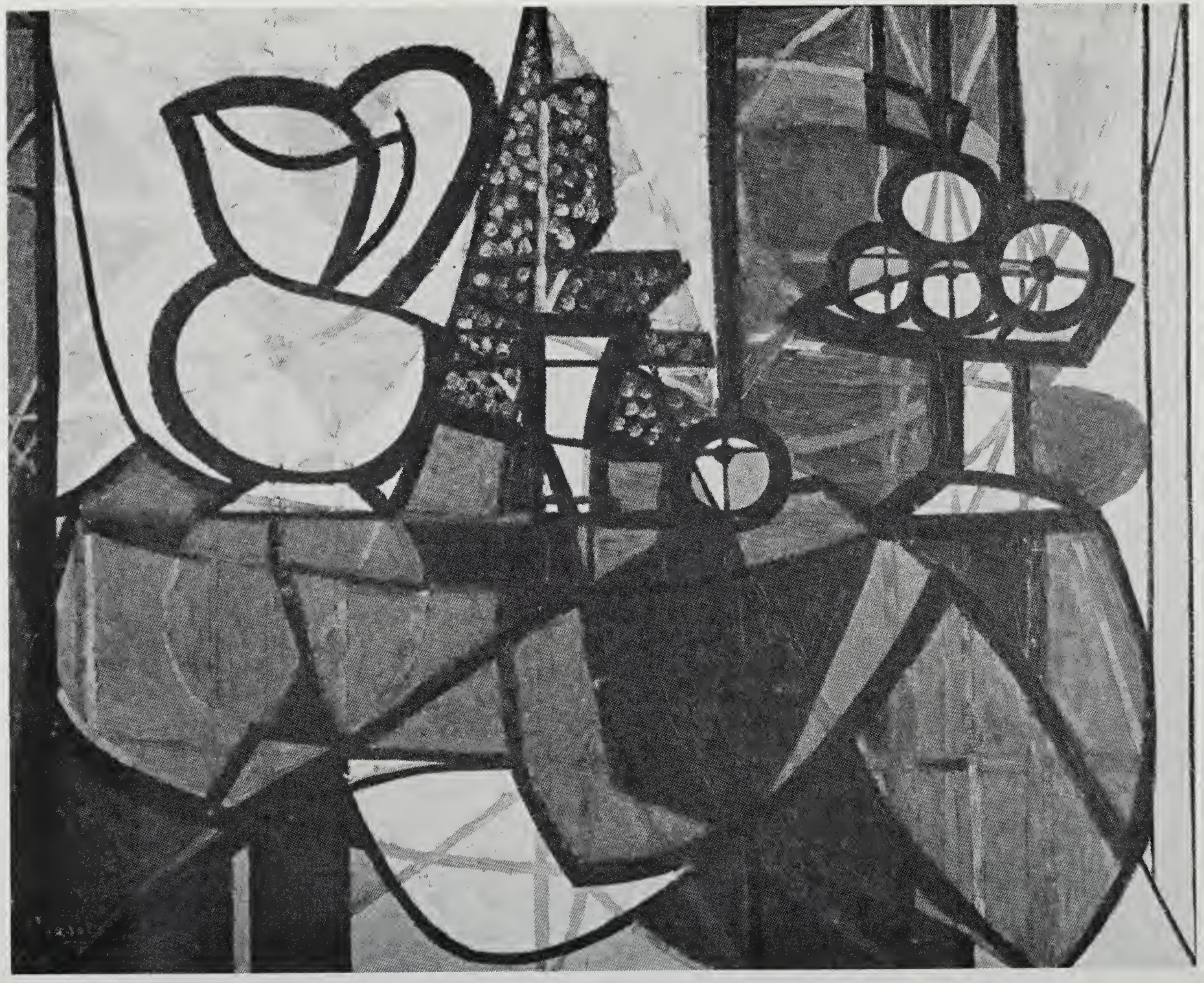
Peaches and Pears
—Pages 29, 37, 44

Cézanne

Fruit and Tapestry
—Pages 7–8, 22 ftn, 23 ftn, 37, 44

Matisse

Blue Still Life (Altered photograph)
—Pages 37–38



Picasso

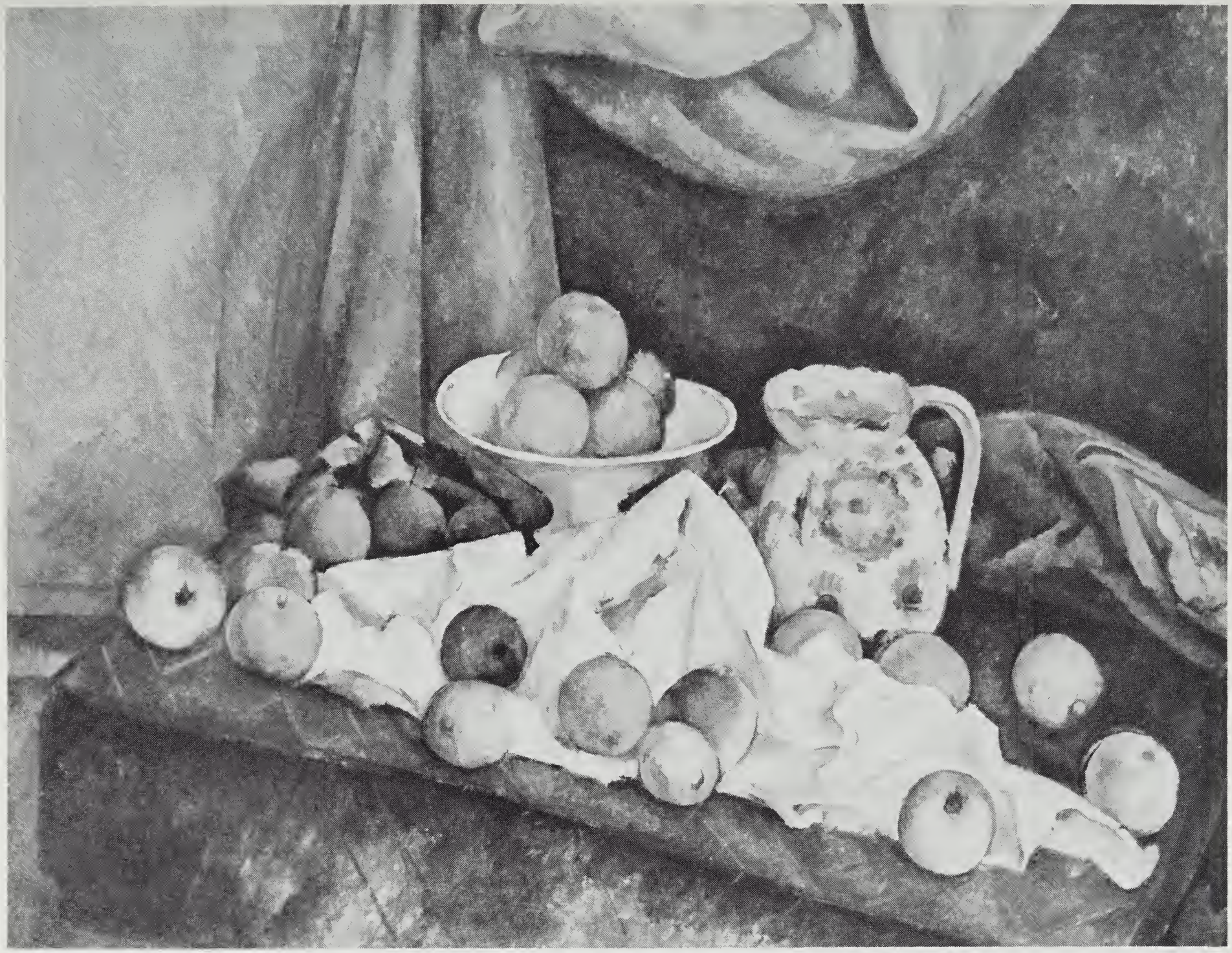
Pitcher and Bowl of Fruit
(Collection: The Museum of Modern Art, New York—
Nelson A. Rockefeller Bequest)—Page 43

Matisse

Blue Still Life (Altered photograph)
—Page 38

Matisse

Blue Still Life (Altered photograph)
—Page 38

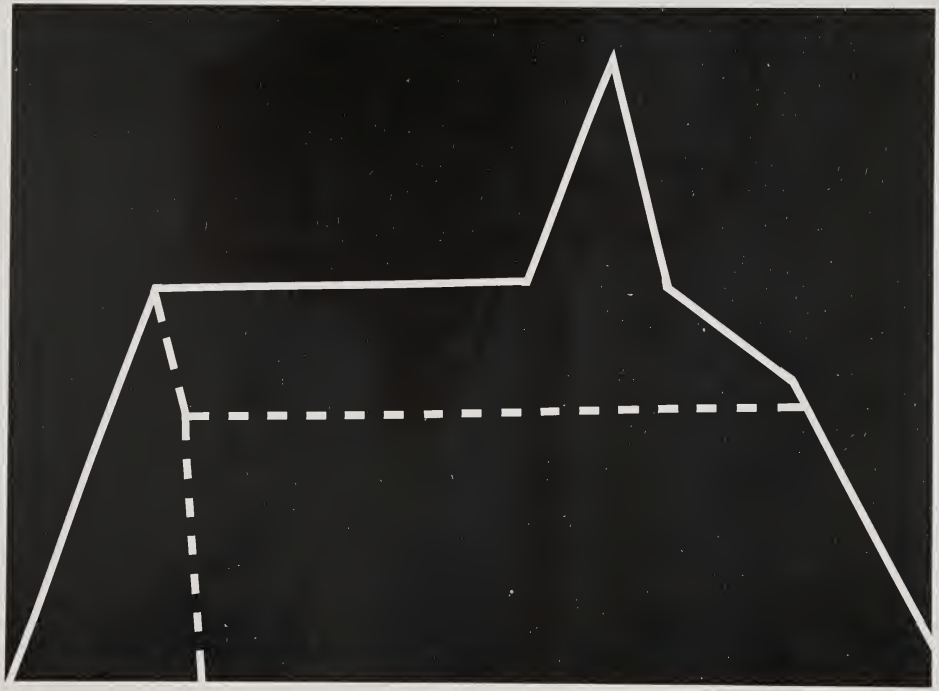


Cézanne

Compotier, Pitcher and Fruit
—Page 37, 44, 45

FOLD-OUT

Blue Still Life
—Pages 7–8, 18–20, 18 ftn, 22–46



Compositional dovetailing in *Blue Still Life* (Fold-out Plate 78)

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